

PUCK

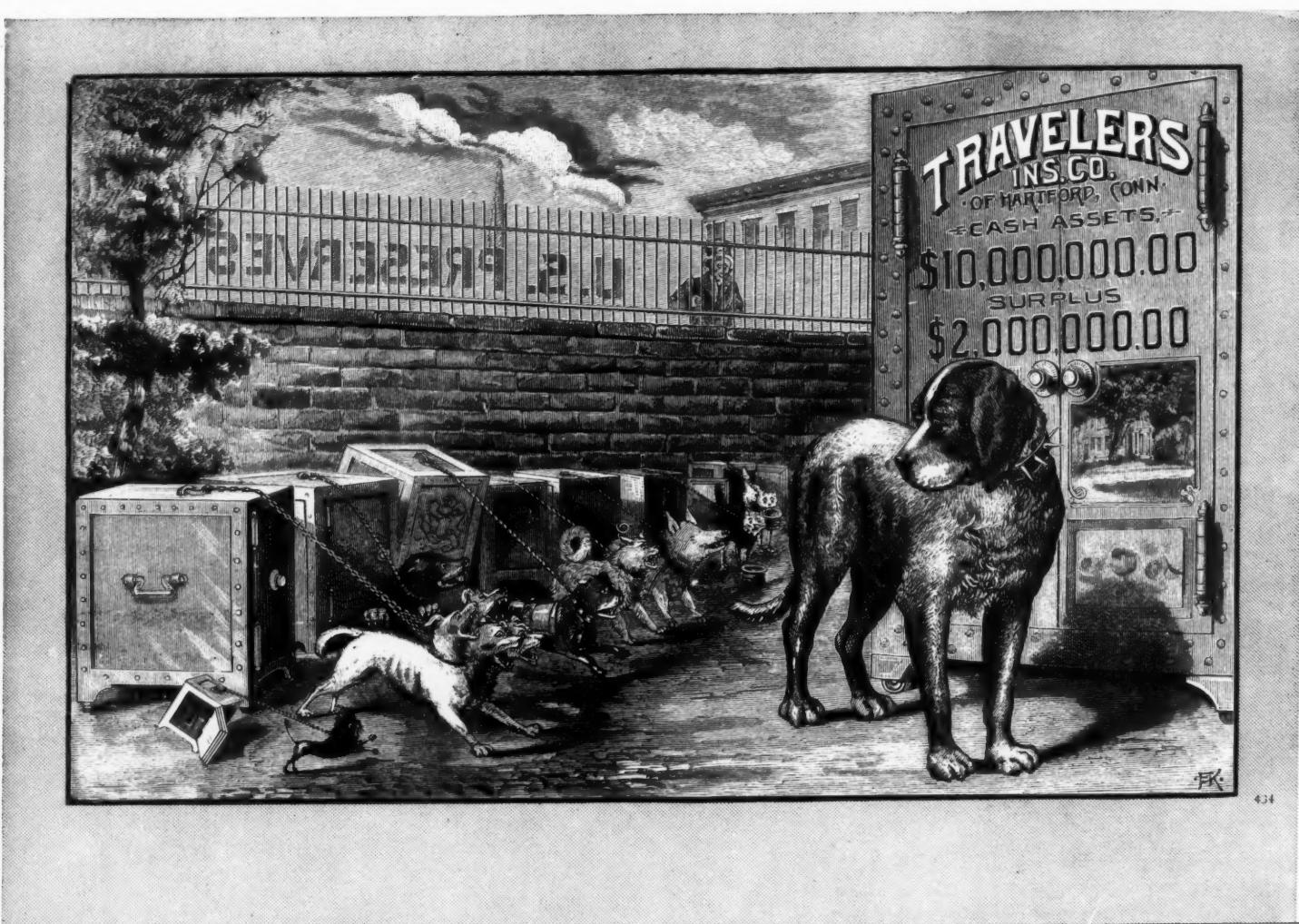


PUCK.

DECEMBER 5,
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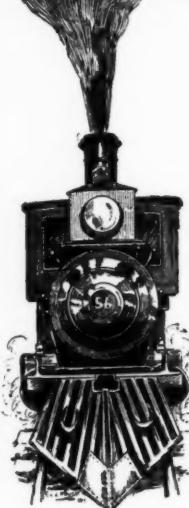
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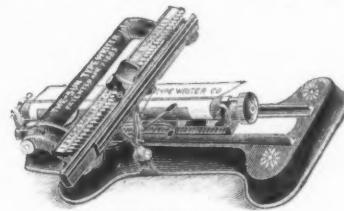
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GEORGE KENNAN, in JUNE CENTURY.

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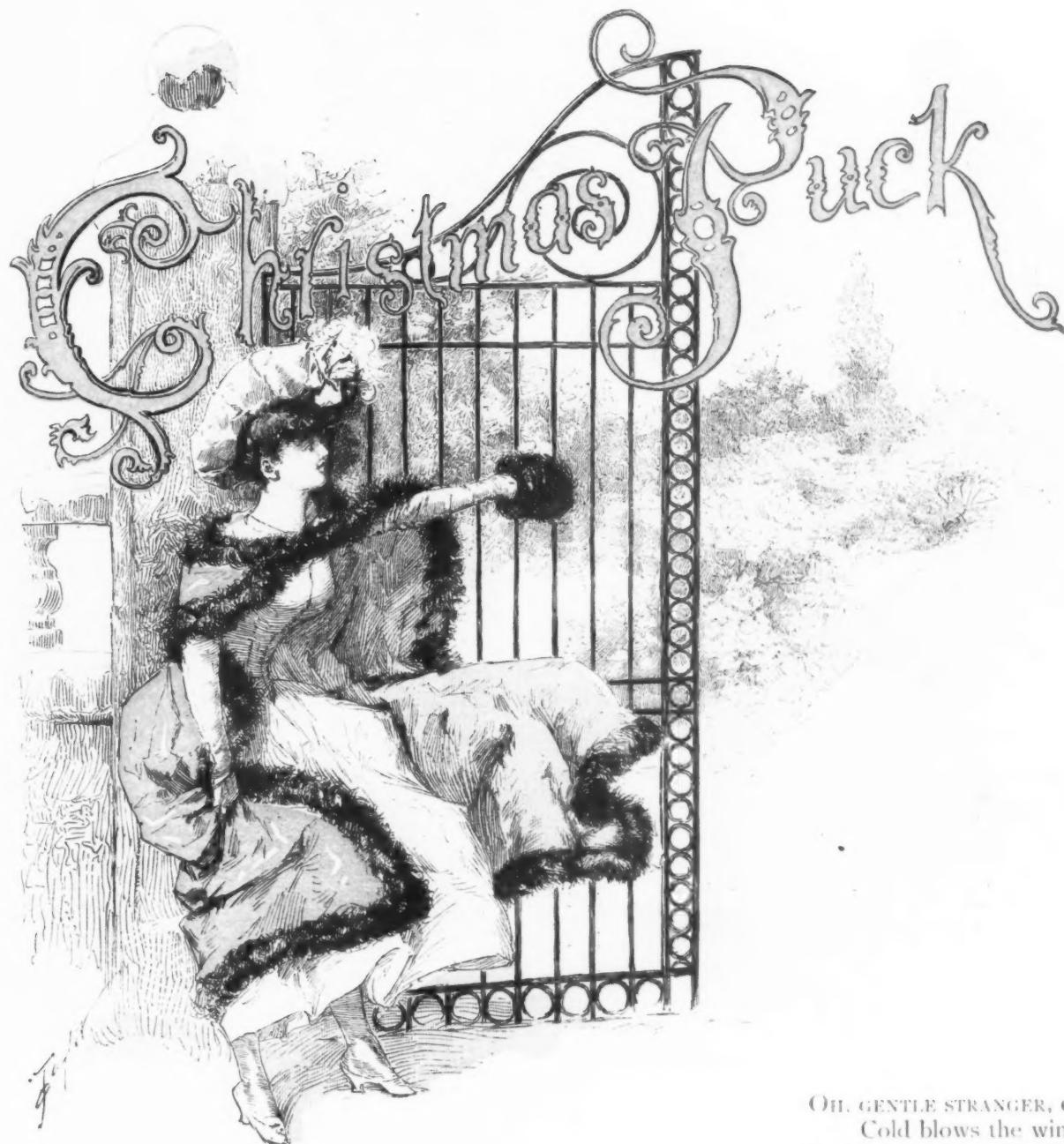
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OH, GENTLE STRANGER, enter here—
Cold blows the wintry breeze—
Beyond the gate the sky is clear,
And fresh the greenwood trees.

What magic has been worked to bring
This miracle about
You ask, to show this glimpse of Spring
While Winter's cold without?

A Spirit with the wand of Mirth
The spell-bound scene has struck—
And wakened in the wintry earth
The Land of X-MAS PUCK.

WALK IN!



THE CHRISTMAS PUCK.

THE BOSS.



HEN MIKE DERCONY bowed a modest acknowledgment to the congratulations of the gentlemen of his coterie, and rose, glass in hand, to return thanks for the honors with which his bride's health had been received, his masterful spirit prompted him to end his speech as follows:

"An' it's yerselves knows, boys, that many a good boy's split by marriage. He dar' n't call his sowl his own, an' he's afeard o' the last dhrink for fear the babby might be raisin' a hullabaloo whin he's dhrinkin' it. Now, wanst for all, boys, that is n't me. Devil a hait I'll be changed by marriage; an' sure it's Maggie here that knows that same."

The blushing bride looked down at her new shoes, and was understood to murmur a faint assent. The wedding party broke up, and Mr. Dercony's married life began.

Mike was, by profession, a hod-carrier, and by force of circumstances a dweller in Shantytown. He was a good workman, and, withal, a convivial soul, whose nerves and stomach seemed to justify the confidence he reposed in them. Above all, he considered himself the head of his household, and was wont to reflect: "Well, av I have to knuckle under to the boss itself, sure whin evenin' comes an' I go home, I'm me own boss."

And yet, very early in his married life, he became conscious that some unacknowledged power kept him out of Barney Reagan's saloon on the corner. Something seemed to impel him homeward when his day's work was done, and it needed not the jeers of the coterie to convince him that matrimony had wrought some unexplained change in the habits of his life.

One Saturday evening he returned to his house. His week's wages were in his pocket, and the old masterful spirit was strong within him, urging him to assert his independence.

"I'm goin' down to Barney Reagan's fer a while," he remarked abruptly, as soon as he had swallowed his supper.

"An' why not?" returned Maggie, sweetly: "Sure, it must be dull fer ye at home here, an' no wan but meself to luk at."

Then, as he rose to go, she added: "Won't ye lave the thrifle o' money wid me? Sure it's not safe to be carryin' the like these times."

This question reminded Mike that he had been in the habit of turning each week's wages over to his wife, and his spirit rebelled.

"No, Maggie," he answered: "sure I'm fitter to be thrusted wid it nor you. I'm boss."

"In troth an' ye are, honey," replied Maggie: "plaze yerself, an' ye'll plaze me." And she took a clothes line from the corner, and proceeded to lace it in an intricate network across the doorway, about a foot from the ground.

"An' what in the wur-r-ruld is that ye're doin' now, Maggie?" inquired Mike, watching the operation with protruding eyes.

"Only puttin' up a bit of a tiliphone, darlint, that'll tell me when ye're comin' home, the way I'll be awake to see ye."

"An' how in the devil is that goin' to tell ye I'm comin'?" asked the wondering Mike.

"Oh, it'll tell me right enough," responded his wife. "Now go on wid ye, and injy yerself. Will ye take all the money? Mind ye, I have n't a pinny in the house."

"Maggie," returned Mike, with dignity; "I'm the fittest to attind to the money. I'm boss!" and he stepped over Maggie's telephone with proper caution, and was soon plunged in the varied joys of Barney Reagan's corner.

About half-past twelve Mr. Dercony returned to his dwelling. His face was flushed, and his eyes were vacant. So was his mind. He had totally forgotten his wife's telephone; but it did not fail to record his arrival. A step, a shuffle, an interrupted oath, and Mike Dercony measured his length upon the kitchen floor. There he lay and snored till morning, oblivious of the circumstance that Maggie had convinced herself by actual search of a fact that she had foreseen. His pockets were empty.

Mike awoke in the early morning, feeling like any thing but a boss. His head ached; but Maggie was tender and sympathetic. She condoled with him because he had no money left; but assured him she was "willin' to fast more nor wan day for his sake," which was small consolation to Dercony, whose appetite soon returned, and who, toward evening, recorded the maxim, that "Sunday's no good to a man whin he's flat bruk."

The following day, when the grocery store opened, Maggie's credit was good enough to send Mike to his work with some dinner in his pail, and Mike was hardly out of sight before he sampled it.

"Musha, is it the salt say itself that the colleen's put in me can for soup?" he ejaculated, as he spat out the first mouthful. Either Mike's palate was hopelessly vitiated, or Maggie's agitation had turned her dainty cookery to a very spring of Marah. Mr. Dercony's second day's fast made him feel less like a boss than ever.

But there was an appetizing supper awaiting him on his return, and Maggie was all smiles and affectionate greeting. She assured him that she had put no unusual amount of salt in the food that day, but remarked that she had heard that such was the effect of whiskey on the human palate when men had passed a certain stage of life.

"Not but what it's quare, some way," she admitted, as she rose to adjust the telephone at the door, "fer it's meself well knows, Mike, that ye never touch the like."

Mike assented and realized with a qualm that he must eschew whiskey. It was a pleasant beverage taken in good company, but not worth starving two days to enjoy.

He noticed his wife's occupation. "Phwat's that ye're doin', avick?" he inquired, with some interest.

"Only the tiliphone, honey, like the other night," she replied, looking up.

"Take it down!" he said, severely. "I'm not goin' out tonite, nor no night. Ye can't dhrive me out. I'm boss here, any how."

"Surely, indade an' ye are," responded Maggie humbly, unfastening the clothes line. "Ye're the masther o' the house, an' I'd like to see who'd dare to say boo to ye."

"So wud I," responded Mike, with inflated chest. "I said on me weddin' day, an' I say it now, that I'm me own boss, whatever comes."

The Dercony's household is now the model of Shantytown.

G. H. Jessop.





IT SHINES UNSEEN — The Old Black Diagonal Under Your Winter Overcoat.

HOWEVER ENTHUSIASTICALLY a yachtsman may praise his sloop in the summer, he always prefers a cutter in winter time.

A STUDY OF the servant-girl question discloses the extraordinary fact that the greater part of our Domestic Intelligence is Foreign Intelligence, and a very low grade of Intelligence at that.

EAR-MUFFS, Algy, will at least protect your ears from hearing the remarks which your appearance in them will occasion. But do be a man, if you can, and leave muffs of all sorts to the ladies.

"GEE — WHIZ!" said Uncle Peleg, as he almost dropped the spectacles from his nose in his excitement; "No wonder them New York millionaires are pilin' up money hand over fist! Look here, Martha, an' see the kind o' clothes they wear!"

CLOTHING. — 10,000 millionaire suits from Fifth Avenue trade, \$3, \$4, \$5. RAGTAG & BOBTAIL, 1111 Secondand St.

AN EXCHANGE SAYS that the best sculptor's clay is found near Baltimore. Wrong. Canova was the best sculptor, and his clay reposes in Florence.

"YES," SAID Shakem, who had been feeding on medicine for two months, "I've been very lucky—I've survived my cure."

THESE ARE the days when the small boy, who shrieks if his face is washed in cold water, feels only a thrill of delight as his blue fingers mould the frigid snowball. Truly, the will is the real creator of conditions.

THE INDIVIDUAL who trudges in the mud wears trousers hanging to his heels; but he loftily perched on a bicycle arrays himself in knee-breeches. Thus, in the moral world, as we sink lower, the less we seek to flee contamination.

THE KEEN breath of Winter lays bare the pretence of shabby gentility, as the bright blue turned-up collar looms above the indescribable dull hue of the overcoat of '84.

YOU SHOULD never judge a ham by its cover.

A CERTAIN PUBLISHER offers "Prometheus Unbound," or bound in the richest style.

AN IRISHMAN recently became wildly indignant on purchasing a new dictionary, and finding that it contained all the words in the old one.

THE APE who tried to shave himself is still at his work the world over. Let a leader of fashion clap one single glass in his eye, and a thousand fools will proceed to cultivate a squint.

A TRAVELER, RETURNED from the West, says he never knew exactly what was meant by "mile-age" until he went railroading in Missouri. He says the average mileage is reckoned on the basis of two hours a foot.

DON'T LAUGH at the man who slips on your sidewalk, Bobby. His fall only makes the snow harder for you to scrape off.

WE THINK a cloth jacket is warmer than a fur-lined cloak, Matilda, because there is no temptation to leave it unbuttoned.

EVEN KINGS must die and millionaires have their troubles. The man who sits a throne, or even one who is possessed of \$10,000,000 can't keep his trousers from bagging at the knees.

MY BOY, never travel under false pretences. After a vain attempt to skate on your ear, don't tell the spectators that you were only trying the strength of the ice. Even your best girl won't believe you.

HARD TO BEAT — The Egg of a Roc.

BE GENEROUS to your servants. Oranges are plentiful and cheap.

A GOOD MOTTO for a man who keeps a slate: "Do not use the pencil."

THE WARMEST PART of a lady's winter hat, is her hair. Whatever else is worn is merely ornamental.

SWEET is the tinkle of the sleigh-bell — especially to the man who is getting two dollars an hour for the music.

THE TATTOOED PAPUAN of the dime museum has put on a fur coat, and come out as the Hairy Candle-Eater of Nova Zembla.

"THAT'S a delightful little *moreau* Miss Edgerly is singing." "Yes; but —" "But ?" "Yes; I wish it were a little less so, as it were."

COFFEE GROUNDS — The Coast Regions of Brazil.

THE ANNUAL crop of good resolutions is almost ripe. There is, however, little danger of any body scurving his Christmas jollity by too early indulgence in the green fruit.

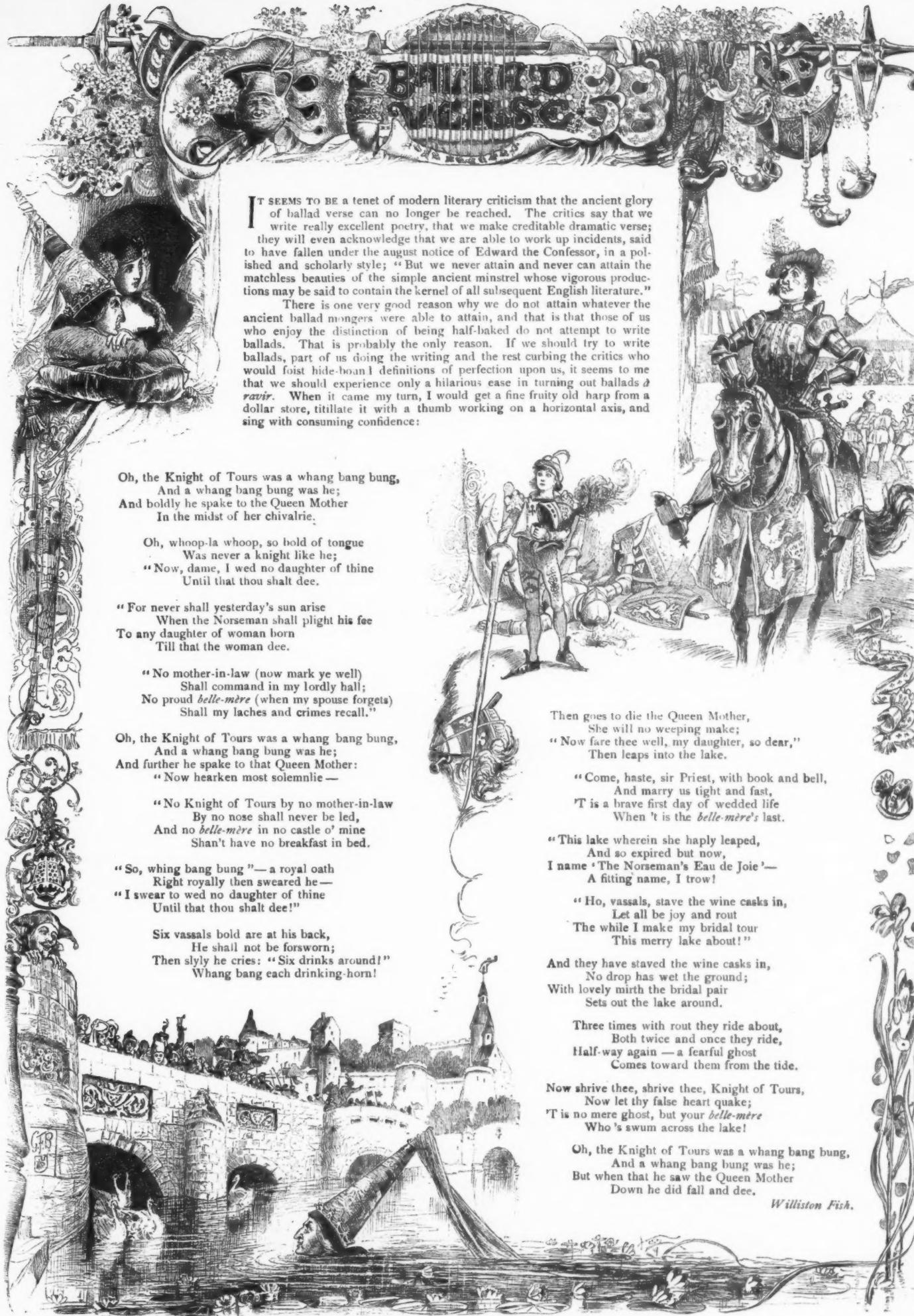
THE BUZZ-SAW is a bad thing to have at your finger ends.

A CERTAIN LITTLE BOY thinks Santa Claus should do his great annual tour on a gift horse.

THE PEN is indeed mightier than the sword, if the sword may be judged by the part it plays in the average editorial duel.

"DON'T BE ALARMED, FRIENDS," said the man who had fallen down an elevator shaft; "there's no need of that mop and bucket. I'm an old-time tobogganist, you know."

THE UPTOWN GIRL wraps around her neck a mass of fur as thick as his arm, and gaily trips over the pavement in shoes as thin as a New Year's promise of reform. And yet she marvels that she has both cold and headache at once.



IT SEEMS TO BE a tenet of modern literary criticism that the ancient glory of ballad verse can no longer be reached. The critics say that we write really excellent poetry, that we make creditable dramatic verse; they will even acknowledge that we are able to work up incidents, said to have fallen under the august notice of Edward the Confessor, in a polished and scholarly style; "But we never attain and never can attain the matchless beauties of the simple ancient minstrel whose vigorous productions may be said to contain the kernel of all subsequent English literature."

There is one very good reason why we do not attain whatever the ancient ballad mongers were able to attain, and that is that those of us who enjoy the distinction of being half-baked do not attempt to write ballads. That is probably the only reason. If we should try to write ballads, part of us doing the writing and the rest curbing the critics who would foist hide-boan definitions of perfection upon us, it seems to me that we should experience only a hilarious ease in turning out ballads à ravis. When it came my turn, I would get a fine fruity old harp from a dollar store, titillate it with thumb working on a horizontal axis, and sing with consuming confidence:

Oh, the Knight of Tours was a whang bang bung,
And a whang bang bung was he;
And boldly he spake to the Queen Mother
In the midst of her chivalrie;

Oh, whoop-la whoop, so bold of tongue
Was never a knight like he;
"Now, dame, I wed no daughter of thine
Until that thou shalt dee.

"For never shall yesterday's sun arise
When the Norseman shall plight his fee
To any daughter of woman born
Till that the woman dee.

"No mother-in-law (now mark ye well)
Shall command in my lordly hall;
No proud belle-mère (when my spouse forgets)
Shall my laches and crimes recall."

Oh, the Knight of Tours was a whang bang bung,
And a whang bang bung was he;
And further he spake to that Queen Mother:
"Now hearken most soiemnlie —

"No Knight of Tours by no mother-in-law
By no nose shall never be led,
And no belle-mère in no castle o' mine
Shan't have no breakfast in bed.

"So, whing bang bung" — a royal oath
Right royally then swearer he —
"I swear to wed no daughter of thine
Until that thou shalt dee!"

Six vassals bold are at his back,
He shall not be forsworn;
Then slyly he cries: "Six drinks around!"
Whang bang each drinking-horn!

Then goes to die the Queen Mother,
She will no weeping make;
"Now fare thee well, my daughter, so dear,"
Then leaps into the lake.

"Come, haste, sir Priest, with book and bell,
And marry us tight and fast,
T is a brave first day of wedded life
When 't is the belle-mère's last.

"This lake wherein she haply leaped,
And so expired but now,
I name 'The Norseman's Eau de Joie' —
A fitting name, I trow!

"Ho, vassals, stave the wine casks in,
Let all be joy and rout
The while I make my bridal tour
This merry lake about!"

And they have staved the wine casks in,
No drop has wet the ground;
With lovely mirth the bridal pair
Sets out the lake around.

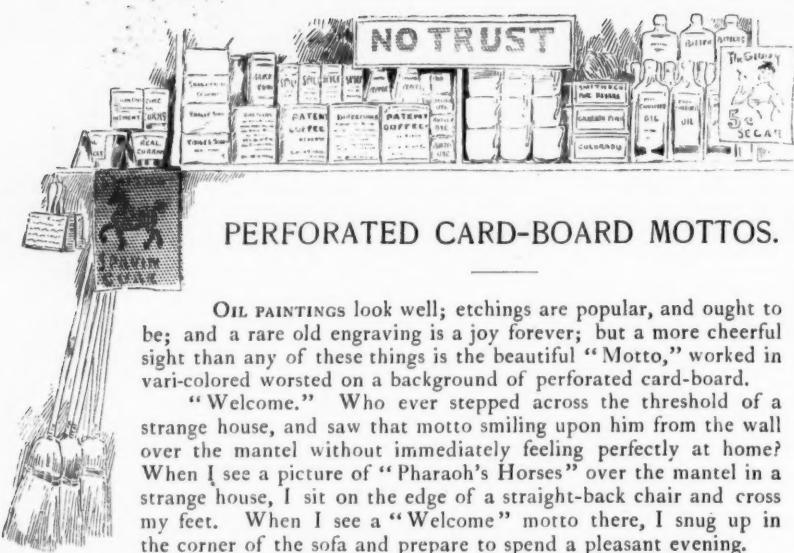
Three times with rout they ride about,
Both twice and once they ride,
Half-way again — a fearful ghost
Comes toward them from the tide.

Now shrie thee, shrie thee, Knight of Tours,
Now let thy false heart quake;
'T is no mere ghost, but your belle-mère
Who's swum across the lake!

Oh, the Knight of Tours was a whang bang bung,
And a whang bang bung was he;
But when that he saw the Queen Mother
Down he did fall and dee.

Williston Fish.

THE CHRISTMAS PUCK.



PERFORATED CARD-BOARD MOTTOES.

OIL PAINTINGS look well; etchings are popular, and ought to be; and a rare old engraving is a joy forever; but a more cheerful sight than any of these things is the beautiful "Motto," worked in vari-colored worsted on a background of perforated card-board.

"Welcome." Who ever stepped across the threshold of a strange house, and saw that motto smiling upon him from the wall over the mantel without immediately feeling perfectly at home? When I see a picture of "Pharaoh's Horses" over the mantel in a strange house, I sit on the edge of a straight-back chair and cross my feet. When I see a "Welcome" motto there, I snug up in the corner of the sofa and prepare to spend a pleasant evening.

A popular motto in some families is "No." I was puzzled when I first saw that word, worked in drab-colored zigzag letters, to know exactly what it meant; but I found it was derived from the old maxim: "Learn to Say No."

It is intended particularly to benefit the young men of the family. To my mind, this "No" motto is too abrupt. Why not make it: "No, Thanks"? Then work the "N" in dull white, and the other letters in dark blue. The result will be a motto with more cheerfulness about it than there is about the short one, and it will be just as expressive.

I once had a striking experience of the power of one of these simple mottos to fill with joy a sad and weary heart.

I was traveling up in northern Michigan, in mid-winter, when it was so cold the horses wore leggings and German socks, and the chickens wore six-button gloves. I crawled out from under seven heavy bed-quilts Christmas morning, broke the ice in the water-pitcher, washed, buttoned on my clothes with my thumbs, picked the ice-beads from my whiskers, and went down to breakfast.

I was ushered into a big, bare dining-room, with high ceiling and lead-colored walls, marched clear down to the coldest end of it, and placed at the table right in front of a lovely motto hanging slightly askew on the wall—"Home, Sweet Home"—worked in three shades of green; sea green, pea green and green.

I took my seat, put my hands in my pockets, and became so lost in admiration of this evidence of the landlord's tender thoughtfulness, that I said "yes" mechanically, when the waiter girl clapped a plate of butter down on the table, and asked if I would "Like s' mush?" Every time

I sent my mush back to be warmed, I would look up gratefully at this motto; and, as I scraped the congealed gravy from my beefsteak, as I pried some fried potatos from the dish, as I drank my tepid coffee, how comfortable and "home-y" the place seemed; and it was all on account of the motto. But for that, the world would have seemed dark and drear, even on that bright Christmas morn.

Another motto, not often worked in fancy colors, but popular with some, is: "Terms Cash." I do not think this motto deserves its popularity. The more I see of it, — the oftener my attention is called to it, — the less I like it.

Old Mr. Letlive, successor to Live & Letlive, who keeps a grocery store up at Watkins's Corners, has softened and improved this motto. He has stenciled upon a sheet of mud-colored straw paper, and tacked upon the inside of the door the following couplet:

"Since Man to Man is so Unjust,
We Hardly know which One to Trust."

This, it will be seen, is not imperative. It is not harsh and dictatorial. It simply intimates that cash payments are preferred.

I sat in Mr. Letlive's store one day, and had an opportunity to



A SIGN OF THE THEATRE SEASON.

MR. HANOVER SQUEER (*to his fair but provincial cousin*). — What kind will you have, Nan?

MISS NAN TICKETT. — I think I try a little of that francase. I'm sick of vanilla.



Synd. Griffin

"ON CHRISTMAS MORN.

MR. O'BRIEN, the Younger. — Don't stir fer de loise av ye, Patsy! Santi Claus is fillin' de stockin's; I seed de wooly coat av him wid me own eyes!

observe how really useful such a motto is in a business of that kind. Frequently, while I sat there, a customer would come in and ask for a number of articles which old man Letlive would wrap up silently while he chewed the end of a match. Then he would place his hands on the counter, and gaze reproachfully at the customer, as he or she gathered up the goods and disappeared. Then Mr. Letlive would put on his spectacles, step over to the desk, and write down the items in his book. Then he would turn back the leaves to see how the account stood before, mentally add this last amount to it, sigh, and resume his conversation with me; but with a preoccupied air that was sad to behold.

During two hours, Mr. Letlive's sales amounted to something like thirty-seven dollars; and the following items were paid for in spot cash: Nutmegs, 5c.; peanuts, 2c.; horehound candy and licorice, 2c. Total, 9c. These cash sales were undoubtedly due to Mr. Letlive's "Motto."

Morris Waite.

A MERE MATTER OF ARITHMETIC.

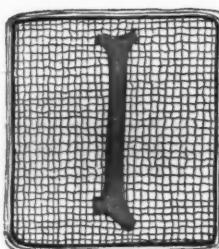
MR. HOFFMAN HOWES (*speaking of a celebrated ACTRESS*). — You say that she is just twenty-one years old, Old Chappy.

MR. ROCKAWAY BEECHE. — Yes, dear boy.

MR. HOWES. — Oh, come, now! I know of my own certain knowledge that few yeahs ago she was twenty-five.

MR. BEECHE. — That's all wight, Hoffie; few from twenty-five leaves twenty-one, does n't it, old fellah?

IT WAS AWFUL.



IT WAS by the merest accident that I happened to hear the following distressing conversation between young Mr. and Mrs. Mushy. They had just returned from their wedding tour, and were about to undergo the mortal agony of their first separation, for Mushy was going back to his office desk, there to remain for four long, weary, dreadful hours.

"How shall I ever live a *whole* half day without you, dearie?" whispered Mrs. Mushy.

"You won't miss me much, will you, darling?"

"Miss you? O Horace!"

"Ever and ever so much!"

"Every moment will seem an *age*!"

"My darling!"

"And you will come home just as soon as ever you can, dearie?"

"You know that I will."

"O Horace! I'm so glad!"

"Glad you are my own dear little wifey?"

"Yes, darling."

"I'm a thousand, thousand times glad!"

"You old darling!"

"But now I really must go!"

"O Horace!"

"There, there! The little girly must n't cry."

"I just can't help it, Horace. It's so hard to see you go! Why must we ever be separated for a single hour? It is too cruel!"

"But I'll be back so soon. Be a brave little woman!"

"O Horace! I can't!"

"But you must. I'm not worth crying for."

"Yes you are, too."

"Indeed I'm not, Birdie."

"Indeed you are!"

"Well, well, sweetheart, I'm off now. Just one more kiss."

He took a dozen, and then gasped out.

"Just one more."

"I've a mind to keep tight hold of you, and not let you go at all," she whispered.

"What would you do with ugly old me around all the time?"

"I'd be the happiest woman in all the wide world!"

"No?"

"I would!"

"You don't love me that much?"

"Love you? O Horace!"

"You little precious!"

"You dear old boy!"

He took another, and another, and a few more. She also seemed to be helping herself to a bountiful supply. Then he said:

"Good-bye, darling." — "Is it time for you to really go?" — "Indeed it is. Good-bye, birdie." — "Go-o-o-d-bye — precious! Are you sure your watch is n't too fast?" — "Oh, it's just right. Good-bye, wifey, dear." — "Bye-bye, darling. Come home just the minute you can." — "Yes, indeed; I'll run all the way." — "You dear fellow! Good-bye!" — "Good-bye. Throw me a kiss." — "Bye-bye, my treasure boy!"

The door bangs and I hear him go down the steps, and I think the agony is ended. But the next moment the door opens, his head pops in, and he says:

"Just one more kiss; I could n't go without it." He does n't go without it and a good many others beside, and gasps, "Now I am off!"

Then he goes out to the corner, walking backward half the way, and fluttering his handkerchief. I catch sight of a dainty little bit of cambric waving from a window below my room, and I drop into a chair in all the querulousness and cynicism of my old bachelorhood, and say:

"Well, I hope to goodness it will last; but I just don't believe it will. If I felt sure it would, I — I — don't know but I'd get married myself."

Zenas Dane.

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WINTER WAIFS.

RELIGION AS SHE IS TAUGHT.

DR. AQUINAS.—I am afraid, Deacon, that after all, it would be better for me to resign.

DEACON CRÉSUS.—I am sorry, sir; but your interpretation of certain doctrinal points is greatly disapproved by many of our members.

DR. AQUINAS.—Indeed! I, too, am sorry. I hope that your next pastor may be willing to accept instruction from the congregation with docility.

WHAT IS FUNNY?

Is it funny to watch a man as he catches sight of an "L" train about a block from the station, rushes up the stairs three steps at a time, hands out a dollar bill for a ticket, grasps the change without counting it, and makes a break for the gate just as it closes?

No, it is not funny.

But is it funny to see the "I-didn't-want-that-train-anyhow" expression, which the man reaches for? It is.

HOW HE WAS RECEIVED.

SHE.—Did you see the Chinaman, dear?

HE.—Yes.

SHE.—How did he receive you?

HE.—Coolie.

THEY WENT.

"Now let's take a look at the Sanitarium," said a tall Philadelphian who was showing off the Quaker City to a Chicago visitor.

"I don't care if I do," was the reply; "I'm just about as thirsty as I usually get."

SIGNIFICANT.

HOWES (at 6 a. m.)—Good night. BEECHE.—Good night, Hoffy.

A LARGE JOB.

The man who wants to reform the world
Of a billion souls, can guess of the labor
If he'll begin in a very small way,
And try to reform his neighbor.

A RACE OF HEROS.

"Yes," went on Bigbee, who generally has something pleasant to say of Bigbee; "I came of a race of brave men."

"Absolutely all fearless, eh, Bigbee?" inquired Downes, in awe.

"Fearless?" repeated Bigbee, lowering his voice impressively; "Why, it was an ancestor of mine who first swallowed a raw oyster."

THE LESSER EVIL.

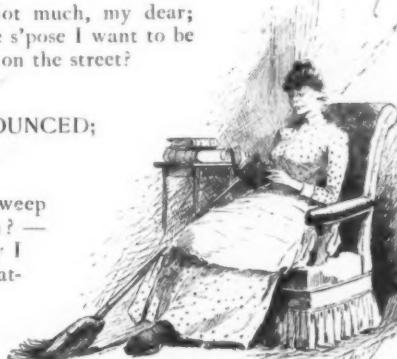
MRS. LENOX HILL, JR.—I'm sure, Lenox, that there is a burglar rummaging around downstairs. Just slip out the back door and call a policeman.

MR. LENOX HILL, JR.—Not much, my dear; let the burglar go ahead. D'ye s'pose I want to be clubbed for disorderly conduct on the street?

SPANISH AS SHE IS PRONOUNCED; OR, ONE FOR MARY.

"Mary, did n't I tell you to sweep the dining-room this afternoon? — and here you are reading. May I ask what author engrosses your attention to such an extent?"

"Servant ease," replied Mary, as she laid down a copy of *Don Quixote*.



AFTERDINNERSPEAKERS.

IT is when he addresses his wonderful genius to the subject of Woman, writ with a capital, that that marvelous being, the afterdinnerspeaker, shines in his most golden light. An afterdinnerspeaker can state more lovely and lovable things about Woman in a ten-minutes' speech, lasting scarcely half an hour, than a man could learn by actual observation in half a century.

That is, he thinks he can.

Afterdinnerspeakers are rare thinkers when they think about themselves. It is their pleasing belief that, did they not gild woman with their eloquence, she would be seen to be but an ordinary being. It is not so, but they believe that it is so. What is so, is that it makes us very "sick i' the gorge" to hear these mahogany orators spout their century-old platitudes with an air as if it were their innate gallantry in natural fermentation. It makes us "sick i' the gorge," and it brings us up to the front with the remark that it is time these petrified sophomores learned that their ancient balderdash is no longer filling a want. We need no elderly foggy, half full of free champagne, and the other half filled with free ante-prandial rum and whiskey to voice our sentiments for us. It is a waste of liquor. Shakspere was grieved to see men taking an enemy into their mouths to steal away their brains; but if he had been referring to afterdinnerspeakers, he would have cried: "O that men should send such a nice enemy on such a fool's errand!"

It is always the implication of the afterdinnerspeaker that woman is far below man; but that over the mellowing wine-cup her miniature vices may be overlooked and the miniature virtues, at least by way of rhetorical exercise, may be magnified into something quite noticeable. This, together with the style of rhetoric which is called high-flown and flowery, but which should be called ancient and fishy, is what makes us "sick i' the gorge."

If, in the future, we must have after-dinner speeches, let them be made before dinner; and let them be, saving in the matter of better execution, like this—to the point:

"In answering to the toast, 'Woman,' I premise a cordial invitation to give me no heed. Women are no better and no worse than men. They have virtues which men have not; but they have foibles which even after centuries the reason of mankind can not regard with patience. Our wives, sweethearts and lovely friends do things each day which, in goodness, shame the deeds of angels; but every other day they do things which, were they men, would ensure their being invited 'outside' for the purpose of having their heads knocked off. A woman has marvelous intuitions. She can almost conduct a successful business with them—she could quite do this, did she not occasionally call in her reason. The reason of woman is like the square root of a negative quantity,—it is n't there."

"Poets of all grades—the many-sided and the merely slab-sided and long-haired—have sought to turn a penny by writing of woman. One cries: 'O Woman, in our hours of ease You seem to do just what you please.'

"How truly he spake! This is only in our hours of ease. When we work, then the other phase of woman's double nature reveals itself, and we do what the women please. It is the profound study of such chestnuts as this

which brings our great novelists more and more to the impressive opinion that woman is essentially feminine. But as there were brave men before Agamemnon and the war-writers in the magazines, so there were men who understood woman fairly well before Boston had attained much more than half its present population.

"When a man comes home

from business, tired, worn and cross, who is so ready as woman to gratify him by getting up a nice fight? The rest of the household may be selfishly engrossed in their own affairs; but man can no more than reach the door, before woman will look up from her novel, see the necessity for a scrimmage on his wan face, and sail right in. In a jesting mood, man may be obliged to explain the reason of his merriment, but he is never called upon to blunt the point of his ill-humor by an instant's elucidation.

"I will say nothing of the pockets that women conceal in their dresses, for this is an occasion of good cheer; nothing of their gossiping, for men gossip as badly; nothing of that foolish love of appearance which makes them go half-clad in the frozen north, for they more than compensate for this departure from sense by the fitness of their raiment in the fierce heat of the ball-room; nothing of the way they flirt—they do the best they can, and to ask more would be unreasonable; nothing of other things of which I wot. But this I will say: that woman will always remain woman, with all the stigma that the name carries with it, until she is able to tell verses from poetry and summer novels from literature.

"Thanking you for that courteous inattention which has done so much to disarm criticism, and which will enable me to make the same fascinating and eagerly ignored speech on some future occasion, I am done."

Williston Fish.



WORTHY OF CONSIDERATION.

"I see that a new word is called for, to describe railroad accidents," remarked Spacer: "the word 'telescope' is not considered appropriate."

"Is n't it?" replied Timan: "then how would collide-scope do?"

THE QUEEN OF MADAGASCAR has a cloak made out of pigeons' feathers. It is a sort of dove cote.

THE HOUR GLASS is the quicksand that engulfs us all.

A MAN WHO does n't like it, says that Swinburne's poetry is all iteration and alliteration.

W. CHYLDERS KIDD, blessed with triplets, says, with a sigh: "Well, three of a kind is better than two pair, anyhow!"

IT IS A sign of Anglomania to turn your New York trousers up when it rains in London; but if it rains in New York, there is no objection to turning your London trousers up—provided you own a pair.

HOW TO TELL who will get off at the next station.—Just watch the men who have relinquished their seats to ladies at the last one.

BET ON the top dog and the bottom facts. Don't reverse this rule.

ADAM AND EVE'S first baby was such a sweet boy that they named him Cain.

A MODEST YOUNG littérateur of New York contemplates "dramatizing some of Shakspere's plays."



A MODERN MONSTROSITY.

MRS. J. BROWNE STONE (who has just returned from Europe, to her DAUGHTER, who has stayed at home).—Good gracious, Emma! We must do something at once for your figure; it's getting as bad as the Venus of Milo's!

LEGAL INGENUITY IN THE FAR WEST.



DAKOTA SHERIFF.—I have a warrant for your arrest.
OUTLAW.—You can't do it, old boy. I'm out of your district.



DAKOTA SHERIFF.—Ah, well, some other time will answer!
(To the MULE.) Now lift him, Pete! —



(Pete lifts.)



THE CHASE.



THE CAPTURE.
Now, my bird, you're in my district!



FINALE.
(Victory!)

A Wellspring of Pleasure

OR, HENRY'S WIFE'S BABY.

A Second Glimpse into "Henry's Home," first seen in the X-MAS PUKE for 1887.

Dramatis Personae.

MRS. YOUNGWIFE. A CALLER (of no importance). HENRY (of less). THE BABY ("absent, but present in idea").

(In Parlor, THE CALLER, at the end of her patience and half an hour's waiting. Enter, on tiptoe, MRS. YOUNGWIFE.)

THE CALLER.—Ah, Julia, I'm—

MRS. YOUNGWIFE.—Why, how do you—oh, good gracious! (Abruptly disappears. After five minutes, again returns.)

THE CALLER.—I'm afraid I intr—

MRS. YOUNGWIFE.—Intrude, you dear thing? Why, I'm perfectly delighted. (Starting.) There, I know Ellen never will remember to— (Disappears for five minutes more. Re-enters.)

THE CALLER.—You appear so occupied that, perhaps—

MRS. YOUNGWIFE.—Sh!

MRS. YOUNGWIFE.—Sh! (In painfully repressed whisper.) It's Lucius—he's gone to sleep. I'm charmed to see you—only please don't speak loud—he's so wakeful, Lucius is!

THE CALLER (whispering).—Is n't he well?

MRS. YOUNGWIFE (bridling).—Well? Indeed he is! Everybody says such a healthy child never was seen. Well? The idea!

THE CALLER (cautiously).—He's about six months old, is n't he?

MRS. YOUNGWIFE (stiffly).—My dear, I'm surprised at you! Lucius will be seven months old two weeks from next Tuesday morning at five minutes past six, precisely. But, really, you'd think him eight—you certainly would. He's so precocious, Lucius is!

THE CALLER (concluding to change subject).—Very cold to-day, don't you think?

MRS. YOUNGWIFE.—Truly it is. I've not known such weather for ever so long—not since Lucius was born. But b'ess is 'ittle 'art, 'e does not mind it, Mama's own—

THE CALLER (seeking to recall MRS. YOUNGWIFE to sense and coherence).—How is your husband?

MRS. YOUNGWIFE (indifferently).—Henry? Oh, well enough—why not? I think it's nearly time for him to come home, but I'm not sure. I'm so occupied with Lucius—

THE CALLER.—Some one told me that he's looking rather badly, and I—

MRS. YOUNGWIFE (indignantly).—Whoever said that was one of those envious old maids who know nothing about it. The prettiest little thing—hair almost an inch long—and when he gets his teeth—

THE CALLER (mystified).—What! Who?

MRS. YOUNGWIFE.—Why, Lucius, of course!

THE CALLER (partly recovering herself).—Have you seen your friend, Mrs. Topnotch, lately?

MRS. YOUNGWIFE.—I don't know Mrs. Topnotch.

THE CALLER.—No? You used to be very intimate, I thought.

MRS. YOUNGWIFE.—Yes, ages ago—before Lucius was born. But when a person insults me—

THE CALLER.—What!

MRS. YOUNGWIFE (becoming excited).—Outrages every sacred feeling of one's heart—

THE CALLER.—You surprise me!

MRS. YOUNGWIFE (half crying).—Behaves like a perfect fiend—

THE CALLER (lost in amazement).—What can she have done?

MRS. YOUNGWIFE (almost sobbing).—She said—she said—boo-hoo!—she said—that—

THE CALLER (with intense interest).—Oh, speak, quick!

MRS. YOUNGWIFE (exploding).—That Lucius squinted! (Prolonged pause.)

THE CALLER (feeble).—Is n't it horrible about young Boodle? Accounts found short, you know.

MRS. YOUNGWIFE.—Lucius's accounts will never be found short, I promise you. He's going to be the soul of honor and probity—for he's to be a lawyer. He'll be so legal, Lucius will!

THE CALLER.—He might succeed his father as—

MRS. YOUNGWIFE.—A cotton broker? Upon my word! That's well enough for Henry—but, *Lucius*—oh!

THE CALLER.—What does his father wish?

MRS. YOUNGWIFE (with great haughtiness).—Lucius will be amply able to arrange his affairs without dictation, I fancy. He'll be so self-possessed, Lucius will!

THE CALLER (trying another topic).—There's to be a very interesting lecture to-morrow evening. Miss Styla, the celebrated authoress, speaks on "The Higher Education of Women."

MRS. YOUNGWIFE (sneering).—What does she know about it? The idea of her venturing to express any views on such a subject!

THE CALLER.—She's generally thought an authority on it.

MRS. YOUNGWIFE (scornful beyond description).—An authority! On the higher education of women! Why, she has n't—bless the woman, she has n't—she has n't any baby!

[THE CALLER, now rather at a loss what to say, is relieved by the arrival of HENRY, who enters in a sidelong, apologetic way.]

HENRY (with timid boldness).—Jule, how goes it? (To CALLER.) Ah, how do you do? (Approaches to kiss MRS. YOUNGWIFE.) Well, dear, all right, eh? I'm awfully glad to—

MRS. YOUNGWIFE (in the very face of attempted osculation).—Oh! Henry, do shut that door—have n't you any consideration? You'll let a draft right upstairs upon Lucius. No, don't slam it—what a man you are—why, you may wake Lucius!

HENRY (meekly obeying).—Whew! It must be fifteen below to-day. I'm half frozen!

MRS. YOUNGWIFE.—So you are! Now, be sure you warm yourself thoroughly before you go near Lucius—remember! He's so sensitive, Lucius is!

HENRY.—And I've got one of my beastly headaches, too.

MRS. YOUNGWIFE (to CALLER).

—Oh, dear, you can't guess how those headaches worry me! Suppose he should transmit them to Lucius—he's so hereditary, Lucius is!

THE CALLER (foreseeing a domestic disturbance).—I must say good-bye. I've made too long a call already.

MRS. YOUNGWIFE (suddenly becoming listeningly oblivious).—Hark!

HENRY (striving to save the situation).—Oh, no; it's not at all late. You must n't—

MRS. YOUNGWIFE (sforzando).—Henry! Will you keep still a moment? I'm certain I hear—oh, mercy me! (Rushes out.)

HENRY (as if this explained all explainable things).—It's Lucius!

[MRS. YOUNGWIFE's voice heard from upper regions in mingled expostulation, reproach, wrath, grief and commiseration. Hibernian accents reply. Infantile shrieks follow.]

THE CALLER (panic-stricken).—Good-bye! (Hastily escapes.)

[Noise gradually subsides through a lengthened diminuendo, occupying fifteen minutes. Re-enter MRS. YOUNGWIFE, in a high state of excitement.]

MRS. YOUNGWIFE.—Oh, what do you think? That wretched Ellen had left him—actually left him, the faithless thing, when she'd only been sitting there three hours—and the poor, dear, blessed little angel—

HENRY (with a worm-will-turn sort of calmness).—Well?

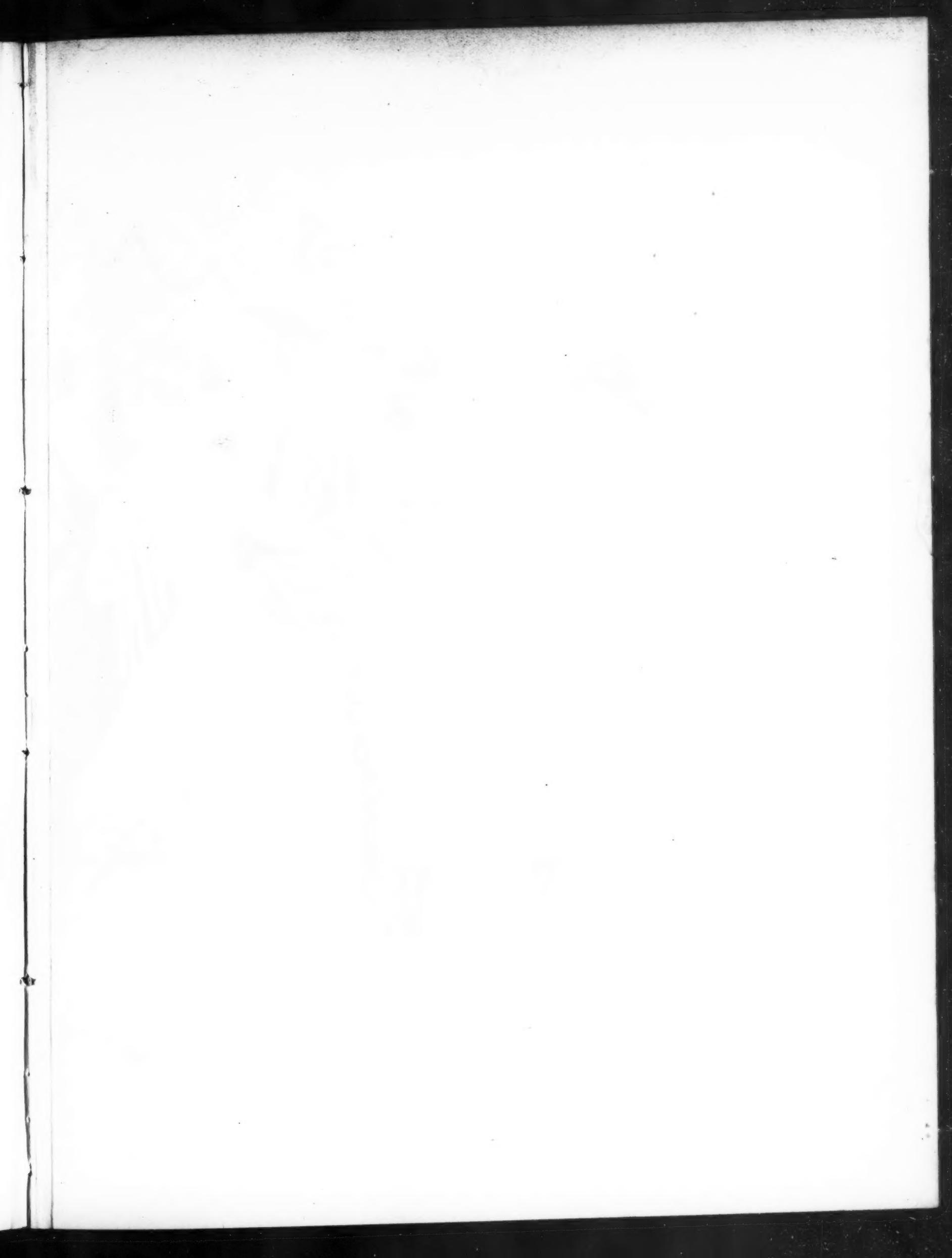
MRS. YOUNGWIFE.—Had waked up—waked up, I say—

HENRY (still calm).—What of it?

MRS. YOUNGWIFE (remarkably near hysterics).—What of it? What of it? Oh! When Lucius is a father, Lucius never will say "What of it?" when his wife tells him—oh, have n't you any feelings? Lucius would have. He, at least, will be paternal, Lucius will! For Lucius—

HENRY (in utter desperation).—Con-found Lucius! ["A Tempest, with Thunder and Lightning." Curtain, quick as may be.]

Manley H. Pike.



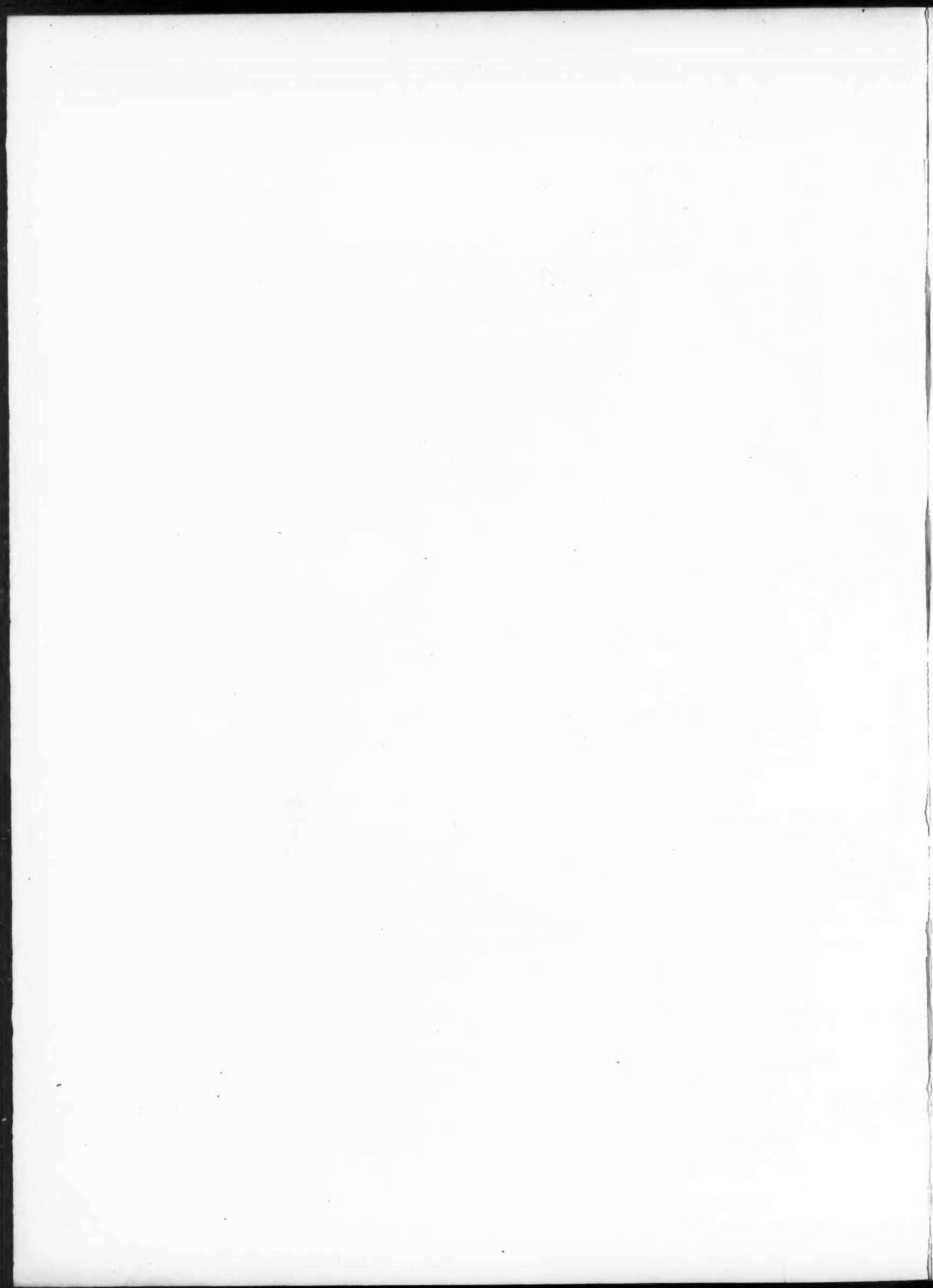


MAN MAKES THE DRESS.—THE ARRIVAL OF THE STRUCK

CHRISTMAS PUCK.



STRUCKILE FAMILY AT THE SWELLINGTONS' FANCY-DRESS BALL.





BALLADS OF THE TOWN.

VIII. ELOPEMENT.

ON CHRISTMAS EVE there was a ball,
And I was not invited—
I did not know the host at all,
And felt in no way slighted.
I waited there beside his door,
And heard the music's beat,
And caught the quiver of the floor
Beneath the dancers' feet;
While a song I know
Said: "Over the snow,
Over the snow and away!
There's moon and sun
For what's to be done
Before the break of the day."

The moonlight fell as cold as snow
On that great front of granite;
A minute seemed to pass so slow
A lifetime could not span it.
But, after all, the kindly moon
She sent them home at last;
And none too soon—ah, none too soon—
I saw them tripping past.

And then her carriage stops the way—
My lady's blazoned carriage.
I know 't was only yesterday
Her father's second marriage.

And down the high stone steps she goes,
And lackeys wait her there—
O winter winds! O winter snows!
Have you seen one so fair?

She steps toward the carriage door,
And then—a sudden flutter—
The footman ran—her father swore—
But she was in my cutter.
And up the road and up we flew,
And heard my ponies' feet
Strike out a tune more sweet and new
Than any music's beat.

And up the snowy road we sweep,
And leave the town behind us;
The dancers sleep, the fiddlers sleep—
And never a man shall find us.
But up, upon the snow-clad hill,
That morning's light makes red,
For fair or foul, for good or ill,
Two lovers shall be wed.
And a song I know
Says: "Over the snow,
Over the snow and away!
It's life and a wife,
And a wife for life,
Before the break of the day."



H. C. Bunner.

A ROYAL MARRIAGE À LA MODE.

"Oh, Mama," exclaimed the Princess Eugenie Victoria Josephine Natalie Louise Beatrice of Hohenstauffen, bursting into the Queen's apartments one morning about noon, as Her Majesty was eating her roll and coffee preparatory to rising: "Oh, Mama, I see by the morning *Gazettergram* that I am to be married to the Duke of Encumberland. They've got his picture in the paper, and he's as homely as that little Prince I was going to be betrothed to last week. Am I going to marry him?" This, petulantly.

The Queen took another bite of the roll, to gain time, and then sighed deeply.

"My dear," she said, gently, "you must ask Prince Bispfennig; he arranges all such things, you know."

"But I don't want to marry such an insignificant puny man. The *Gazettergram* says that he doesn't reach up to my shoulder, and his Duchy is a mean little thing on the edge of the Black Forest."

"I don't know, really, my dear," again expostulated Her Majesty. "I wish you wouldn't bother me about such trivial things."

"But why can't I marry whom I please? The *Gazettergram* said that I ought to have something to say in the matter."

"Newspapers say altogether too much nowadays. You must recollect that you are a Princess."

Being thus rudely recalled to herself, the Princess gathered up her morning dress of sky-blue satin, and swept out of the room in true royal style to seek the Prime Chancellor.

"Well, my dear Genie Vic Josie Nat Louie Trix, what's the matter with you?" asked the Chancellor, as she came into his presence.

"Oh, I'm all—no, I ain't. Do I have to marry that horrid Duke of Encumberland?"

"So your father and I arranged last night—but how did you hear of it?"

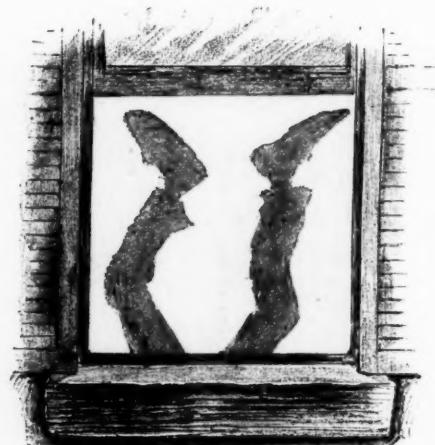
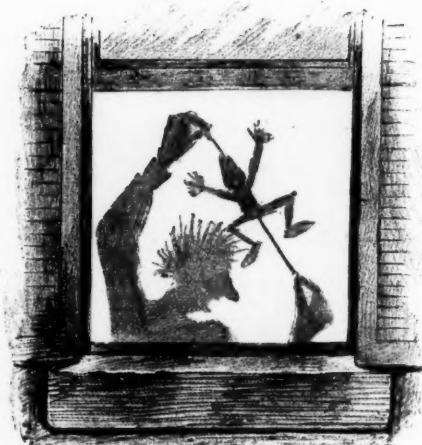
"I saw all about it in this morning's *Gazettergram*—and the Duke's picture, too."

"The newspapers probably got hold of a cut of some defeated presidential candidate from America—they all are homely," answered the Prince with a well-bred air of diplomacy. "The editor of that paper must display more sense or else the Press Censor will pay him a visit, and he will have to quit business. But don't worry, my dear; some Ambassadors arrived this morning from the King of Castile's Hope, and I am inclined to think that perhaps it would be better for you to marry him. Your father will agree with me—he does in everything."

The suave old diplomat drew out a miniature set in rubies and pearls, and presented it to the girl.

"Why, he's nothing but a baby! But he's awfully cute!" exclaimed the Princess, looking at it.

SEEN ON THE SHADE.



No, our esteemed fellow-citizen across the street has not gone crazy—

"Certainly, certainly," said the sly old man; "but he will grow, and you will be a Queen."

The Princess thought a moment, and then turned suddenly: "I would like to marry him; may I? How long will I have to wait?"

"Only a matter of fifteen or eighteen years, my dear," said the Prince, persuasively. "Would you like it?"

"Yes; oh, yes!" cried the maiden in delight.

"Well, dear, you shall," and the Prime Chancellor put down his foot in a determined way. "Now, that is settled to your satisfaction, perhaps I might suggest that I am very busy casting a horoscope as to the next war."

The Princess took the hint and retired slowly; but at the door she stopped: "Can I keep the miniature as a Christmas present, to make sure that the *Gazettergram* doesn't print the King's picture?"

The old Prime Minister toddled up to her as fast as his eighty years would permit, and whispered, as he placed the portrait in her hands, "Are you satisfied?"

"I guess I am," whispered the Princess to herself, as she trod the halls of her ancestors. "I'm the first Princess of Hohenstauffen that ever had any thing to say about her own marriage. Fifteen or eighteen years—well, may be by that time I shall be so old and ugly that the King won't want to marry me, and then I'll be too old to be worried any more about it."

Flavel Scott Mines.

BOUND TO RISK IT.

Thirteen's ill-luck; but when you get
Thirteen eggs for a dozen, alack!
Who ever heard of you spoiling the charm
By giving the odd one back?

ALTHOUGH "The man in the moon came down too soon," as recorded in the old nursery rhyme, he nevertheless probably fell "like the Gentile due from heaven."

DAMASCUS BLADES were possessed of a wonderfully good temper. How they managed to preserve this we don't know, as they were used to carve in Turkey.

PEOPLE like the seaside in Summer; but in Winter they run down the coast.

IF YOU RECEIVED any presents last Christmas that you did not fancy, this is a good time of year to dispose of them.

AN EQUABLE TEMPERATURE is always attractive. This is why whiskey is popular in both Winter and Summer, while water is n't.



— he has only been left to amuse the baby a few minutes, while they get his crib made up.



IV.
I've never spoken to her yet,
I've been in such a daze,
Although she sometimes looks at me
With sort of distant gaze.
I get so weak, I can not speak,
My heart goes beating so;
At every thump it gives a jump,
And says, "Hullo! Hullo!"

II.
Hullo! Hullo! Hullo! Hullo!
Her voice like music rings;
'T is sweeter than the whippoorwill
That in the moonlight sings.
Across the floor, beside the door,
Where I walk to and fro,
She leans beside the telephone,
And says, "Hullo! Hullo!"

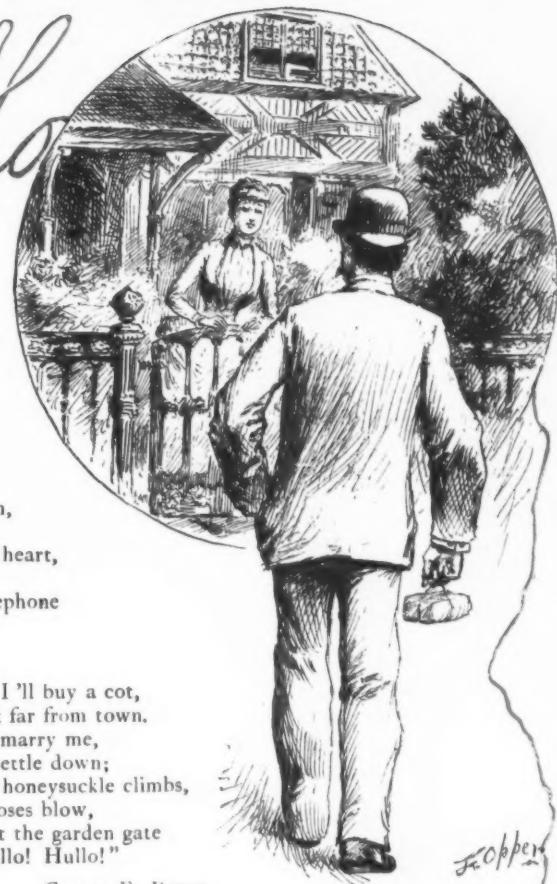
V.
I hear her as I walk about,
In sunshine and in rain,
I hear her in the jingle
Of the elevated train;
And every sound that goes around,
Above or down below,
It seems to say, the live long day,
Those words: "Hullo! Hullo!"

I.
MY HEART is "broke," it is no joke,
I'm happy and I'm sad;
I feel so queer, I sometimes fear
That things will drive me mad.
A pretty girl with frizz and curl
Came here a week ago
To work upon our telephone,
And say, "Hullo! Hullo!"

III.
Her eyes are of a grayish blue,
Lit with angelic light;
Her face and form fit to a charm,
Her foot's perfection quite;
But oh, the part that broke my heart,
And laid my spirit low,
Was when she touched that telephone
And said, "Hullo! Hullo!"

VI.
I tell you what; I'll buy a cot,
Somewhere not far from town.
If she'll agree to marry me,
We both will settle down;
And there where honeysuckle climbs,
And fragrant roses blow,
She'll meet me at the garden gate
And say, "Hullo! Hullo!"

George E. Devyr.



ON TIME.

HERE comes Mr. Arnold, for you to go to sleigh-riding, Sis."

"Oh dear, I'm not half ready."

"Shall I tell him to come in and wait?"

"No, Robbie Emmons! You know I never keep any one waiting. When he rings the bell, go to the door and tell him I'll be down in just a minute. Then come back to the window and watch."

Robbie proceeds to do as he is told, and, as the last thing, stations himself at the window.

Voice from the dressing-table: "What is Mr. Arnold doing?"

"Nothin'. Just standing on the steps like a gentleman."

Pause.

"What's that noise?"

"Nothin' much. He's only sitting on the rail and drumming with his foot."

Pause.

"What's he doing now?"

"Tearing up and down the gravel walk. You'd better hurry up, Sis."

"Well, ain't I? Look again."

"He's checking up his horse and taking out the whip."

"I guess I'd better go, now. Step to the door and tell him I'm ready."

Cap-and-Bells.

YOU'D BEST be careful, Santa,
where you tread,
Particularly 'round the New York
Chimney,
Lest you become involved with
"wires dead"—
You had, by Jim'ny!

THE SOCK is usually worn on the foot; but in winter time, when the snow ball is ripe, the sock is frequently worn on the back of the neck.



A BUSINESS PROPOSITION.

FARMER OATCAKE — You won't find any chickens here to steal, Free!

FREETRADE FERGUSON. — I knows dat, boss, fer I took 'em all las' week. But I's willing ter take yer chicken coops off yer hands at reas'nable figgah, ef yer 'll call it squar'!

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A BLESSING.

SEEDY STRANGER. — Sir, at this holy and happy season, when the hearts of all are filled with joy, could you not by a good action bring —

MR. GRASPER SIMMONS (gruffly). — If you needed a dinner, why did n't you apply to the authorities? There's no need of going hungry to-day.

SEEDY STRANGER. — You wrong me, sir, — I seek not charity. Do good for both yourself and me by purchasing a box of Stufum's After-Dinner Pills, and secure at once bodily comfort and the sweet consciousness of having relieved the poor.

XMAS is the usual and unaccountable abbreviation for Christmas. Xmas does not mean any thing, +mas might mean some thing, if it were not for the fact that the condition of one's pocket at the end of the season is more apt to be — than +.

A SUNDAY-SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT writes: "The increased attendance at our Sabbath-day exercises is gratifyingly large this December."

A WALK THROUGH Fourteenth Street shows why this is called the holler-day season.

THIS is the happy time of year when you can buy a purple and yellow tin dragon for the baby for "hafferdime."

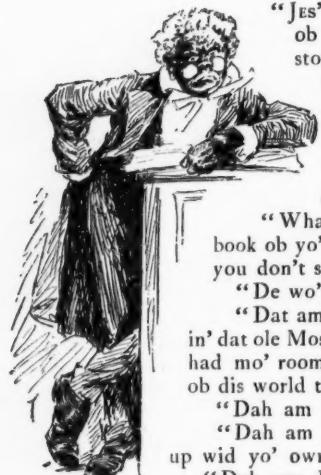
THE INDIANS use nice warm colors for their extra coats of paint in the winter time.

A NICE PRESENT for your poor cousin is a \$10,000 silver certificate.



THE CHRISTMAS PUCK.

EXTRACT FROM A SERMON
OF THE
REV. SIM GOOSEBERRY, 'POSSUM BOTTOM, WEST VA.



"Jes' why dah, am only ten comman'ments, an' some ob dem mighty sho't, in my 'pinion, is 'cause de stones dat ole Moses had 'long wid him on de mountain gib out. Dah am lots ob oder t'ings dat you'd a-hea'd about if dah'd been mo' stone."

"Wha' am de comman'ment 'bout sleepin' in chu'ch?

"Wha' am de comman'ment 'bout sneakin' out afo' de collection's took up?"

"Wha' am de comman'ment dat you got to hab a hymn book ob yo' own 'stead ob usin' yo' neighbor's, an' lettin' on you don't see him lookin' fo' it?"

"De wo'ds ob de tex' am: 'Thou shalt not steal.'

"Dah am cut mighty sho't. Dah am some kinds ob stealin' dat ole Moses would hab put down de specifications ob, ef he'd had mo' room. Dah am some kinds ob stealin' dat de people ob dis world t'ink am honest stealin'—dey am de honest t'ieves."

"Dah am borrowin' ob books, an' neber gibbin' 'em back."

"Dah am de borrowin' ob an umbrella, an' gittin' it mixed up wid yo' own."

"Dah am de axin' fo' a qua'tah fo' a day or so, when you don't 'arn a qua'tah in a mont'."

"Dah am de sayin' dat you'll pay when you come back, when you know you is gwine to walk 'round befo' you'd go back dat way."

"Dah am de borrowin' ob de apple-buttah stirrer, an' sendin' it back home wid de handle broke."

"Dah am de borrowin' ob your neighbor's hoss fo' to go to a funeral, an' goin' right off to a picnic."

"Dah am de tellin' a gal dat you gwine to trade hea'ts wid her, when you haint got nothin' but a sin-box fo' to fool her wid."

"Dah am de stealin' de Lo'd's day fo' to go a-fishin'."

"Dah am de stealin' de Lo'd's money—puttin' a penny in de collection box, an' payin' ten cents fo' a drink."

"Dah am de stealin' yo' neighbor's good name, 'cause yo' own is wore out."

"Dah am de takin' ob de debble's money fo' to gib it towa'd buildin' a chu'ch."

"Dah am de robbin' de dead—disputin' de will, 'cause you did n't get gib enough."

"Dah am de keepin' ob yo' share ob de prechah's salary fo' to go to de circus wid."

"Dah am de keepin' de Lo'd's prayers back—puttin' peppah on de stove ob de sanctua'y."

"I tell you, Moses had n't enough stones by a whole grabe-ya'd full!"

"Thou shalt not steal!" Dah am some ob you sinnahs dat t'ink you kin set down wid de debble an' break five ob de comman'ments, an' den go make it up wid de Lo'd, a-showin' him how nice you kin keep de five dat you don't keer fo' to break."

"Dah is Bruddah Evan Collins; he is one ob dat kind. One day las' summah, I was comin' 'long de road ober yonder by Mister Ca'pentah's melon patch, an' dah was Bruddah Evan Collins lookin' ober de fence at de watahmelons. I knowed de sin dat was in Bruddah Collins's hea't. I knowed dat de sin in Bruddah Collins's hea't was puffin' it up to jes' de size ob de biggest watah-melon in dat patch. I stepped up to him, an' I sez: 'Bruddah Collins, Thou shalt not steal.'

"Bruddah Collins he jes' kep' on lookin', an' he say: 'Bruddah Gooseberry, I ain't stealin'; I is covetin'.'

"Dat's jes' ez bad, I tol' him. You is breakin' de comman'ment. You come 'long wid me."

"An' he come. But dat very night he was cotched in dat patch wid de biggest watahmelon undah his a'm."

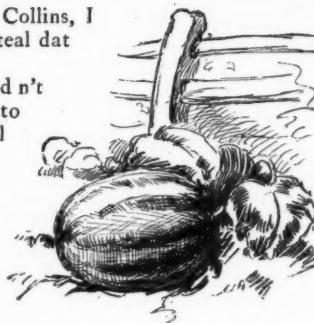
"De nex' time I seed Bruddah Collins, I sez: 'Bruddah Collins, what fo' you steal dat watahmelon?'

"Sez he: 'Bruddah Gooseberry, did n't you tell me dat it was jes' ez bad fo' to covet dat watahmelon ez it was to steal him?'

"Yes, I sez: 'Shoo it is.'

"Arter you done tolle me dat, sez he: 'I did n't want fo' to covet dat watahmelon, no mo'. I jes' took him fo' to stop covetin'."

"De debble's makin' tracks mighty close ahin' Bruddah Collins."



Tobe Hodge.



ONE OF NATURE'S MYSTERIES.

This is Signor Rinaldo de Flamerino, the "World-Famous Fire-Eater," in his Christmas Eve performance.

CHRISTMAS HINTS FOR THE MILLION.

A champagne cork enrobed in a red-flannel ball dress and gilded, makes a handsome pen-wiper for your literary friend.

A pair of blue goggles is a suitable gift for your pretty-eyed rival.

Do not forget to send your rich aunt a prize Christmas card.

A receipted dress-maker's bill is a nice present for a wife to give to her husband.

The best thing for the forty-year-old maiden to give her dilatory lover is a hint.

Your son-in-law would probably like it if you gave him a rest.

A JUST REBUKE.

DICEY McSHAKE.—Here, Kathleen, is the tur-r-r-key Oi wan at O'Shaughnessy's raffle; and a foine bir-r-r-d it is, too!

MRS. McSHAKE (*sarcastically*).—A foine bir-r-r-d indade!

For the sake av daycence it's a pity yez had n't thought to use your jack-knife on him.

DICEY McSHAKE.—Phwy, bedad?

MRS. McSHAKE.—To cut aff his head an' legs, and save the disgrace av a respectable family by bringin' him home in yure vist-pocket!

MY GIRL.

She who made my existence a summer-night's dream,
As long as my purse stood the racket—alas!
Now turns up her nose at a dime plate of cream,
And sticks me a dollar for oysters and Bass.

A "PEEZNESS" POINT FOR SANTA CLAUS.

LITTLE CHARLIE EINSTEIN.—I should think, Mama, that if Santa Claus was smart, he would change the fashions in little boys' clothes.

MRS. EINSTEIN.—Vhy, don'd you dink dat dey are very nize, now?

CHARLIE.—Oh, yes, of course I do; but how can he?—These Knickerbocker suits leave him such great, long stockings to fill up!



This is Signor Rinaldo de Flamerino, the "World-Famous Fire-Eater," swallowing a spoonful of hot soup at his Christmas dinner.





THE CHRISTMAS PUCK.

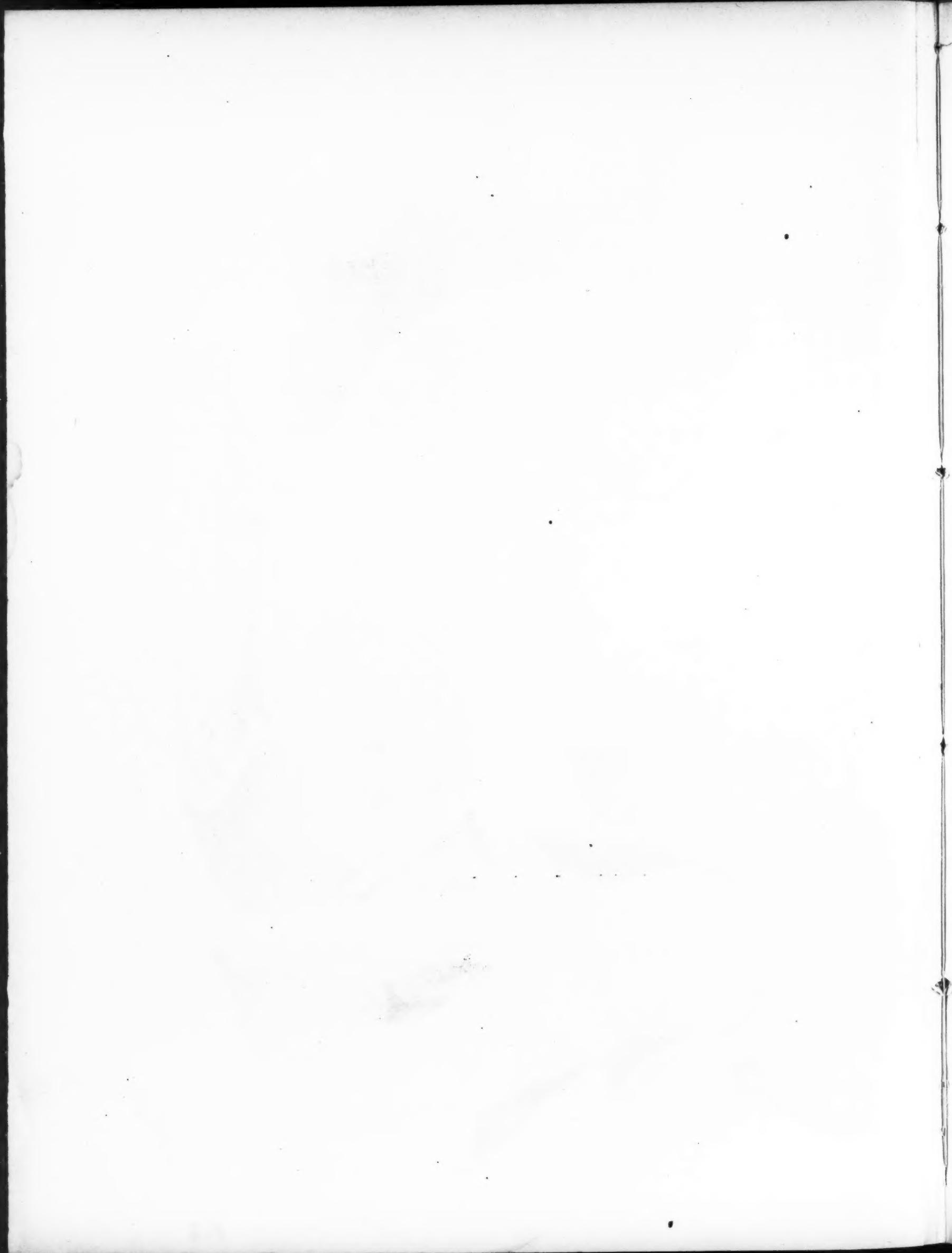


These forms divine
Must in one combine
For the Punch that Puck is preparing —
And the dark-eyed form
Is the Spirit warm,
With the wild Bacchante bearing.

The sweet-faced fair
Puts the sugar there,
Like Charity bland and placid,
And Satire's the jade
Who lends lemon aid
For a dash of the needful acid.

Calm Wisdom, too,
May water the brew
To temper, not quench, your laughter —
Yet water comes best —
With the keenest zest —
Puck thinks, on the morning after.

With "Health and Wealth and Luck to all!" Puck hail, his Readers Great and Small.



WINTER'S MASQUERADE

ONCE UPON A TIME, Winter was sitting by the side of a frozen brook, in the clear black ice of which he observed his wrinkled face and flowing white hair and beard.

"It is an awful thing to be old and decrepit," said Winter to himself, as he ran his fingers through his hair and observed the crow-tracks under his eyes; "I should be happy if I could only be Spring again."

Just then a little gnome sprang out of the earth and said:

"I can make you look so much like Spring that no one can tell that you are Winter."

"Who are you?" asked Winter.

"I am a merry little barber gnome, with a light airy touch, a renewer made by myself and warranted to make hair grow on the baldest head, and half a thousand questions on all sorts of uninteresting subjects."

"How are you going to give me the airs of Spring?" asked Winter.

"First I will give you a nice clean shave, then trim your hair and dye it golden, and you won't know yourself."

So Winter smiled as he stretched himself against a fallen tree to be shaved. The little barber gnome lathered him to the eyes, and shaved him against the grain, and while he was shaving him he asked:

"Does the razor hurt you?"

"Not at all," replied Winter.

"Shave close?"

"Pretty close," replied Winter.

"I was thinking I might make a side-whiskered Spring of you."

"Shave it all off!" replied Winter.

So the little gnome shaved away until Winter's white beard was scurrying along like a wreath of snow. When it was all off, he applied a fresh coat of warm lather, and Winter's smile was like a May sunbeam.

"Pretty cold," observed the gnome.

"Never feel it," replied Winter.

"Now, then," observed the gnome, "sit up a little higher, and I'll cut your hair." Winter sat up, and the gnome continued: "Do you want it left a little bit long, or shall I give you a Riley cut with the clippers?"

"Leave it long enough to bang," replied Winter; "but take it off behind and on the sides with the clippers."

The little tonsorial gnome went to work, and cut Winter's hair in the most artistic style, and shaved his neck. Then he said:

"Shampoo?"

"If you please," replied Winter.

So he gave Winter a good hot shampoo, and the warm water and the bay rum that followed threw him into such a genial warmth that he felt very summery.

"How does that strike you?" inquired the smiling gnome, after he had put on the golden dye, and placed a glass in Winter's hand.

It was some time before Winter could reply, he was so overcome with joy. He felt as though his age had been cut off like a burden, and while the bay rum tingled on his face like the glow of youth, he said:

"Wait till you see me dance the Spring-time back." So he commenced to dance feebly, because his legs were weary and his wind was poor, and the tonsorial gnome, to encourage him, placed a piece of paper over a comb, and began singing a lively air.

"I am getting an Autumn movement on me now," said Winter.

And the merry little tonsorial gnome noticed that the

rejuvenated Winter's manner was gradually becoming livelier and that the air seemed a trifle warmer.

"Keep up that tune, good little tonsorial gnome, with a light and airy touch, a renewer made by yourself, warranted to make hair grow on the baldest head, and half a thousand questions on all sorts of uninteresting subjects; keep up that tune, I say, and in five minutes I'll strike July."

Just then the brook melted and let a cow in, while Winter was dancing livelier and livelier, until his feet could scarcely be seen.

"I'm feeling more Spring-like every minute," laughed Winter. And then in his wild joy he picked up an armful of dry vines and plants, and as he danced and danced, the vines and twigs burst into blossoms, and the violets, anemones and arbutus filled the air with fragrance, and the wind blew them about Winter until it wove them into a beautiful airy garment, in the mutable tints of which the sunbeams darted in wildest revelry.

"I suppose I must be shaved and have a hair-cut very often," said Winter, "to keep up this songful character of Spring."

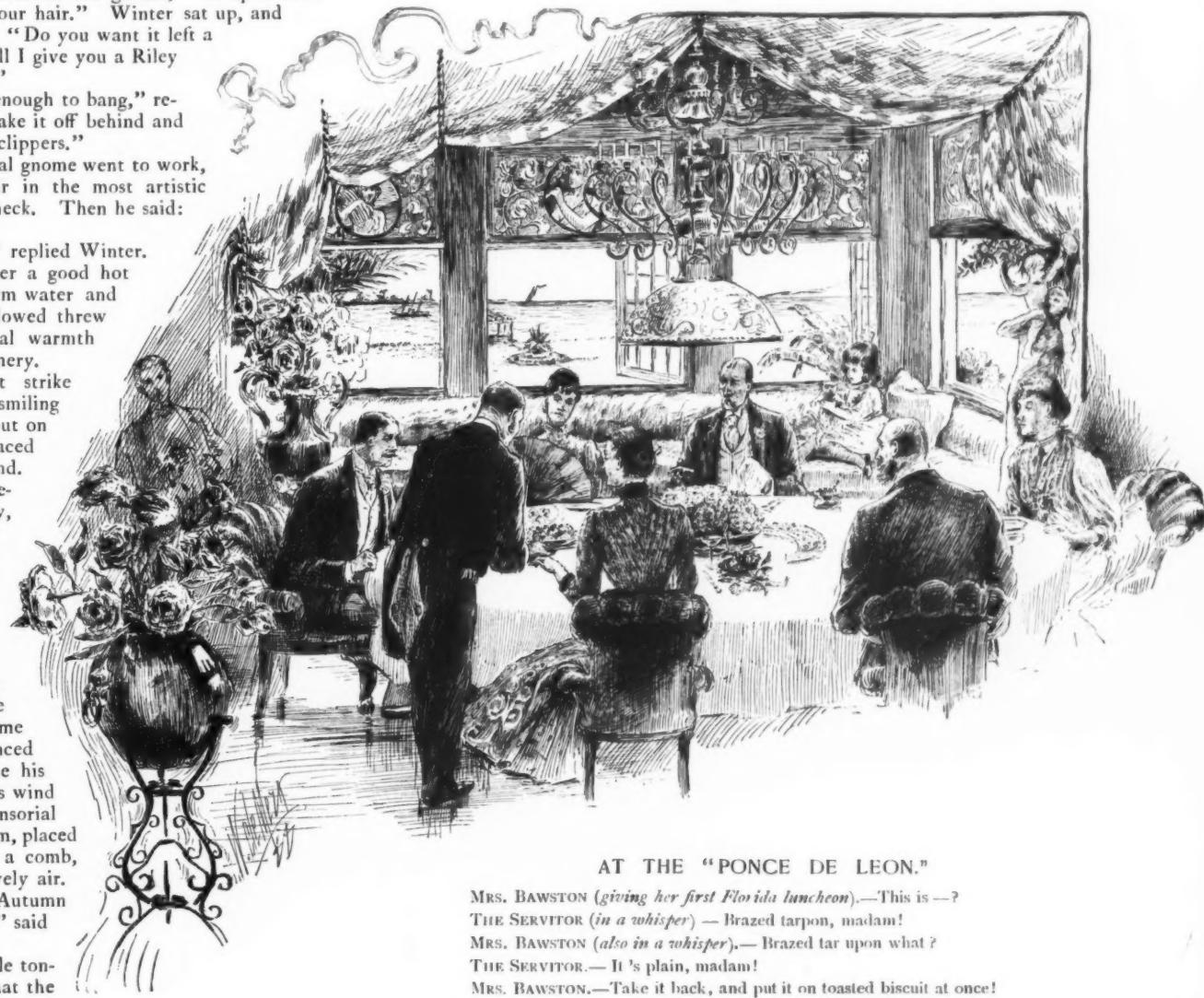
"Not at all," replied the gnome. "When you are awake, you will be Summer, but when you dance, you will be Spring. When you lie down, you will be Autumn; and when you sleep, Winter. You will have long white hair and beard when asleep, and then it will be cold. When your hair and whiskers are black it will be Summer, and when red, Autumn."

Then did the little tonsorial gnome gather his razors and other effects, and disappear through the crevice in the earth out of which he came.

And ever since that day, our famous United States weather has been so sadly mixed, that we have spells of Spring in the middle of Winter and cold snaps in the middle of Summer and Autumn.

And we can all tell whether Winter lances on the violets, or drifts in sweet forgetfulness within the rosy gates of sleep, as the thermometer indicates which garment we must wear to-day — the light and airy duster or the sealskin overcoat.

R. K. Munkittrick.



AT THE "PONCE DE LEON."

MRS. BAWSTON (*giving her first Florida luncheon*).—This is —?

THE SERVITOR (*in a whisper*) — Brazed tarpon, madam!

MRS. BAWSTON (*also in a whisper*).—Brazed tar upon what?

THE SERVITOR.—It's plain, madam!

MRS. BAWSTON.—Take it back, and put it on toasted biscuit at once!

UNCLE PHILEMON



You see, [said Popleigh] this was the way it happened. My grandfather was a supercargo in the India and China trade, and he spent most of his life traveling all over the world, and only coming home now and then to attend to his family duties. He married a wife in Boston, first, and they had five or six children — may be seven — and then she died, and he married my grandmother in New York, and built up the population to the extent of eight boys and three girls. Then she died, and after a while he gave up the supercargo business, and settled down to farming in New Hampshire. He was seventy-eight years old then; but he married again, and went right on helping the census along to the day of his death. I think he left eight up there — he always left them where he found them, and he compounded with their maternal relatives for their keep. He was pretty well off, and could afford the luxury. My father, as I say, belonged to the second crop, here in New York, and he had more half-brothers and half-sisters and half-aunts and quarter-grandmothers and so on, scattered all over the country, than he wanted to count. I've made the acquaintance of most of them, since I got my partnership and bought a house on Lexington Avenue; but there are a few back counties yet to hear from, and the returns keep coming in.

So, you understand, we were n't much surprised when we got a letter from Uncle Philemon, up in North Chuggville, New Hampshire, saying that he'd like to see his brother Augustus's son, and his brother Augustus's son's family, and if we could n't come up to North Chuggville, could n't we let him come down and see us some time. He said he was an old man, and mighty lonely, and he had n't been in New York since 1843. He enclosed his photograph, and when my wife saw it, she said: "Oh, what a dear old man!" and then I knew we were in for Uncle Philemon. Well, he was a handsome old man, for a fact — white hair, clean-shaven face — regular old Joshua Whitcomb, only bigger.

Well, you know how women look at such things. My wife always wants me to be polite to my own family, and she takes in all the aunts and uncles and cousins, just as if they were hers. If I object, she says I don't think seriously enough of my children's future. Great Scott! I'd think a thundering sight more seriously of it, if it depended on what my relations would do for them.

However, so it was, and Uncle Philemon had to come. My wife sat down and wrote him the nicest sort of a letter, and told him how glad we'd be to have him here at Christmas, and have a real family re-union, and get in Aunt Christina to dinner, and Cousin Alonzo and his five daughters, and Uncle Elnathan, and Sarah Clymer, his first wife's daughter, and her late husband's sister, who's living with them. That's the way women do — she wanted to combine Uncle Philemon with a round-up of all the fly-speckled members of my family, whom we go to see once a year, "just to keep up the connection." So she sent the letter off, and Uncle Philemon wrote back promptly that he'd be here three days before Christmas, sure.

Well, when it was settled, we both of us began to feel a little bit uneasy, and my wife said she thought perhaps I'd better have waited and thought it over. You see, we not only did n't know whether we should like Uncle Philemon; but we did n't know whether Uncle Philemon would like us. You know about how we live. I like my claret at dinner, and the whiskey decanter stands on the sideboard for anybody who comes in of an evening. I generally take a nip myself before I go to bed. Then, Sundays, I take a walk in the Park, when the children don't go to Sunday-school. My wife used to teach a class there; but she's kind of got out of the way of it, since she had four babies to look after. I tell you, children take up an awful lot of a woman's time. Now, you know, we saw right off that Uncle Philemon would n't like that sort of thing. Uncle Elnathan told me once, (before I got my partnership,) that he never read *Revelations* without thinking of my future, and Uncle Elnathan would probably be looked upon as a liberal-minded child of sin in a small primitive and rural community like Chuggville, New Hampshire.

My wife and I held a caucus over it, and we decided that the whiskey decanter should go inside the sideboard, and that I should drink my claret for strictly medicinal reasons. My wife wanted to know if I could n't give the stuff up for three or four days, and asked me if I was a slave to the habit; but I told her I was, and we compromised on the medicinal basis. Then we agreed to take turns in escorting him to the various churches, and my wife suggested that I should find out what prayer-meetings were going on, or any other services of an interesting character, so I got a list out of the paper. We had to work a little in the dark, for we did n't know what church he belonged to, but I familiarized myself with the whole subject, and I was ready for him if he should turn out to be a Seventh-Day Baptist or a Millerite.

We thought a great deal about Uncle Philemon, and got to preparing for his visit in various little ways, and arranging things to suit his taste. My wife borrowed a perforated cardboard motto from Uncle Elnathan, and hung it in the spare room, and she stuck some of the children's Sunday-school cards in the looking-glass on the bureau. I found an old photograph album, with a lot of family pictures in it, and I put it in a conspicuous position on the parlor table. We wanted to make him feel at home. But it did seem to me all the time as though I had given a mortgage on my house, or as if I

was out on bail. I got to dreaming of Uncle Philemon.

We got a note from him a day or two before he was expected, saying that we might look for him on the train that arrived at five on Monday afternoon. At half-past five he had n't turned up, nor at six. It was snowing like a feather-bed, and at half-past six my wife said she thought the poor old gentleman must be waiting at the Grand Central Station, and that he was probably so confused by the noise and bustle of the city that he did n't dare to start off by himself. She thought I'd better go and look him up. I did n't want to, but I put on my overcoat and stamped off through the snow.

The snow was coming down so that you could hardly see ten feet in front of you when I got to the place where the trains come in. Just at the corner I stopped, for I heard a noise up the street, and — I don't know why the idea came into my head — but I felt sure that I was going to find Uncle Philemon there.

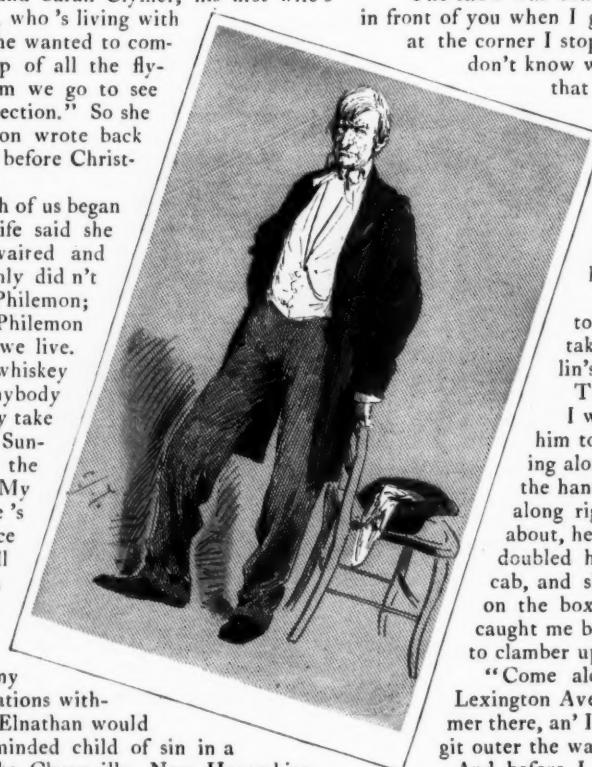
There he was, sure enough. I recognized him right off, although he was muffled up in an army overcoat and a fur cap. He had three hackmen dancing about him, and he towered up above them like the Statue of Liberty. When I came up he was talking New Hampshire so loud that the policemen ought to have heard him in the bar-rooms.

"You're the sixteenth kerridge-driver I've talked to this afternoon," he yelled: "and, by gum, you'll take me to Lexington Avener fer two York shillin's, or I'll mop th' hull durn taown with ye!"

That was Uncle Philemon.

I went up to him and introduced myself, and asked him to come along. But he had no intention of coming along until he got ready. He shook me warmly by the hand. "Glad to see you," he said; "you come along right handy." Then, before I knew what he was about, he hit one of the cabmen in the pit of the stomach, doubled him up like a jack-knife, chucked him into his cab, and slammed the door on him. Then he jumped up on the box like a lively old cyclone, reached down and caught me by the wrist, and hauled me so hard that I had to clamber up after him.

"Come along!" he shouted: "you tell me wharababouts Lexington Avener is, an' I'll drive this dinged kerridge-farmer there, an' I won't charge him no quarter, neither. Hi thar! git outer the way, Mister Man! Gee up, Jenoairy! Whoa!" And before I knew where I was, we were going down Park



THE CHRISTMAS PUCK.

Avenue faster than I ever saw a cab go in the city of New York. Well, I got the old man switched off into Thirty-somethingth Street after a while, and cooled him down, and we stopped and took the hackman out. He was pretty well dazed, and there was n't a bit of fight in him. Five

dollars settled his case, and

he got up on the box and drove us home. But I did a good deal of thinking on the way, and finally I told Uncle

Philemon that he would oblige me if he would n't say any thing about the af-

fair to my wife — and, in fact, if he would be very careful of her nerves. I said that she was n't very strong, and that excitement was extremely injurious to her. He grinned like a satyr, and said I need n't worry myself.

"I'm a leetle lively with the boys, now and then," he said: "but, bless your soul, I'm ice-cream and honey with the girlies."

We got home and sat right down to dinner, and I am bound to say that Uncle Philemon did splendidly. He sat up there looking like an old patriarch, and he talked away about how he'd enjoyed his last visit in 1843, and how much he'd like to have us up at North Chuggville. He told us all about the members of the family, how they all were, and what they were doing. I began to think that he was an uncommonly nice old gentleman, if he was a little hasty in his temper. My wife looked a little nervous when I told him about the medicinal claret; but he took it very pleasantly. He said he occasionally took something in the same way; but he did n't take it at meals.

After dinner I proposed that we should go out and do a little sightseeing, and he assented at once. He wanted to know if there were any concerts at Castle Garden nowadays, and seemed disappointed when I told him that I had n't heard of any. But he put on his army overcoat and his big fur cap, and we set out. His costume was n't just the correct thing for an evening in the metropolis; but he was such a fine-looking, benevolent, grand old man that he carried the style quite gracefully.

When we got in the street, I asked him where he would like to go, and suggested the Eden Musée.

"Eden Moozee?" he said; "that sounds good."

But when I told him what it was, he snorted with disdain.

"Wax figgers!" he yelled; "I ain't no wax figger, nor I ain't come daown ter York to gun fer wax figgers. Say, ain't there any female minstrels or lady aggregations I c'n see, or is this durn taown a graveyard?"

I felt like a puppy nine days old — I was beginning to get my eyes open. I told him that the lady aggregations were out of fashion, and then I took him off to the Casino. I was in hopes that we would not be able to get seats downstairs; but some man had just returned a couple when I got to the box-office, and I had to take them — right down in front.

When the chorus marched in, Uncle Philemon said:

"Whoa! GOSH!" in a voice so loud that the gallery gave him a round of applause, and a fellow who sat behind me told me that if my ears were frost-bitten I'd better go out and rub snow on them. That audience had a good deal of fun with us, before the show was over. Still, there was n't any general recognition of the entertainment we were affording until the curtain came down in the last act. Then Uncle Philemon sat silent in his seat for a full minute, taking all the glory in, I suppose, and then he looked up at me and inquired, in a voice that must have been heard out in the street:

"Know any o' them gals?"

That was pretty bad; but the fun had n't commenced. I lost him in the crowd going out — or rather he lost me — and when I got to the street I tore wildly up and down, looking for him. At last I noticed a

crowd at the stage-door, and I hurried there. There was the old blue overcoat and the big fur cap swaying about in the grasp of the door-keeper and two or three stage-hands, and I heard that white-haired old gentleman bellowing above the howls of the crowd:

"I'm agoin' behind the scenes! I ain't never be'n, an', by gum, I'm a-goin'! Don't you take a-holt of me, Mr. Man! What fer can't I go? I ain't a-goin' ter do no harm. S'pose I'm goin' to eat up yer durned old theayter? Sho! lemme go! S'pose I do wanter see the lady in the pink gaown! Whose gosh-dinged business is it if I do? Lemme loose, ye dood!"

I don't know how I got him out of it; but somehow I lured him into a gilded bar-room, and the magnificence of his surroundings diverted his attention from his scheme of exploration.

"Hi!" he shouted, and all the people in the room turned to look at him; "this is jist abaout rich enough fer my blood. Got many shebangs like this araound taown? Oh, I'm thrivin'!"

He said he would take Medford rum, and the waiter opened his eyes; but he brought the stuff. I had never tasted it before, and it struck me as a pretty mean combination of herb-tea and alcohol. Uncle Philemon said it was pretty good; but it was n't just the right article, and he was going to get a drink of Medford rum that would make him feel at home, if he had to hunt up every bar-room in the city. I don't want to go into details about the rest of that night. It was half-past two when I persuaded Uncle Philemon to come home, and I had a great time with him on the front stoop, where he wanted to sing comic songs.

I got him into his room pretty quietly, however, and then I went to mine. My wife was awake — as much awake as I ever saw her — and she said to me:

"I think it's a perfect outrage that you should keep that dear old man up to this hour of the night. I should think you'd be ashamed of yourself."

I was n't ashamed of myself; but I was dead tired out, and I had a splitting headache, and I was so mad that I was just cussed enough to get into bed without saying a word. I thought the kindly hand of time would lift the veil from her eyes soon enough.

I had n't long to wait. It was rather chilly at breakfast the next day. Uncle Philemon was still in bed. I did n't offer any explanation of our lateness on the previous evening, and there were large areas of low temperature all over the house when I left for the office.

When I came home at five o'clock, I found Uncle Philemon stalking up and down the parlor, with his cap on the back of his head, talking cheerily with my wife. She was staring at him in a dazed, fascinated sort of way, like a bird at a rattlesnake.

"Hello!" he shouted, when he saw me; "I've been sp'ilin' the Philistines. Jest be'n tellin' yer wife about it. Look at this here, sonny, an' weep!"

He drew my attention to a large diamond which was sparkling in the bosom of his shirt.

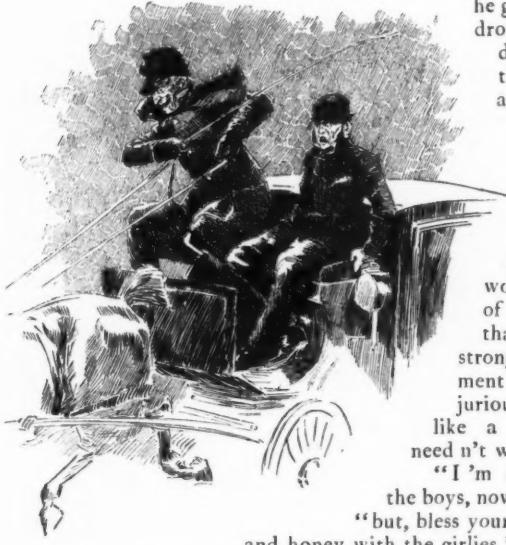
"Buncoed a bunco man out 'n that!" he proclaimed. "How's that fer a hayseed from daown East, with grass on the back of his neck? Oh, the old man ain't dead yit, you bet!"

He was n't dead, that's a fact. But I was, almost. And I was n't looking forward to that Christmas dinner with any particular exhilaration. Outside of the family, we were not expecting anybody but Swazey, and he was looking forward to the time when he should be counted in as a member. He was the house surgeon at Fairview Hospital, and was expecting to marry my wife's sister in the spring. I steered him onto the old man's antics the day before Christmas. He was rather more amused by them than I was, and said he guessed it would come out all right. I only hoped so.

Uncle Philemon went out in the morning and did n't put in an appearance until all the guests had arrived. They were sitting around, with an expression of settled gloom which would have been more appropriate for a funeral than a Christmas dinner, when Uncle Philemon burst in.

"Got 'em all here, with yer?" he exclaimed cheerfully, as he proceeded to knock the wind out of Uncle Elnathan with a tremendous thump on the back, following that operation by kissing the women all 'round. "Well, let's whoop her up," he added, with a fervor in which I detected a flavor of alcohol.

"I've be'n a-tryin'," said Uncle Philemon cheerfully, after we had seated ourselves at the table; "I've be'n a-tryin' to find some reel Medford in this 'ere town, and I've faound it, b' gosh! The barkeep' come from New Hampshire, and he knows Medford when he sees it. Lemme



THE CHRISTMAS PUCK.

show you," and Uncle Philemon left the room to return with a gallon demijohn, which he triumphantly placed on the table. They all consented to sample it, though Aunt Christina, who was a prominent member of a temperance society, rather hesitated, until Uncle Philemon assured her that Medford was not an intoxicating drink.

"Be'n brought up on ru-u-um," he declared with a beaming smile.

The old lady timidly remarked that it tasted rather strong; but was re-assured when Uncle Philemon told her she would n't mind it so much if she should try it again.

I did n't know much about Medford before that dinner; but it is my present impression that, as an intoxicating beverage, it has great advantages in being certain and speedy in its effect. The funereal aspect of the party disappeared in about five minutes. By the time Aunt Christina began to warble "My Days Are Gliding Swiftly By," my wife concluded that it was time for the ladies to retire.

The men all stuck to the Medford. Uncle Elnathan explained to the company that I was a child of sin, and that he had wrestled in prayer for me, and then offered to wrestle with me—a proposition which met with Uncle Philemon's approval. Uncle Elnathan was much offended when I refused to make a match with him, and withdrew in maudlin dignity with cousin Alonzo.

The party broke up; but Swazey and the old man went back to the Medford, and I joined them in a rather dazed condition. The old man was pretty shaky by this time, and Swazey put it to him till he fell down in an attempt to show us how to dance a hornpipe, and lay right there. Swazey examined him for a minute, and then remarked that he guessed he would do.

"Now you look here," said Swazey: "I'm going to send for the hospital ambulance and ship him home by the night train. See?"

He was limp enough when we shoved him in the ambulance, and Swazey and I rode up to the Grand Central with him. Swazey bought his ticket, and we put him on a stretcher and carried him to the sleeper. Swazey explained to the porter that he was very ill, and that I was a professional nurse in attendance. There was a good deal of sympathy expressed by the passengers; and one old lady with spectacles was much touched by his resemblance to her husband in his last illness. She wanted to know what was the matter with him, and if he was n't going to die. Swazey told her that it was a case of progressive locomotor ataxy, with depression of the nerve centers, and that he regarded the patient as a hopeless case.

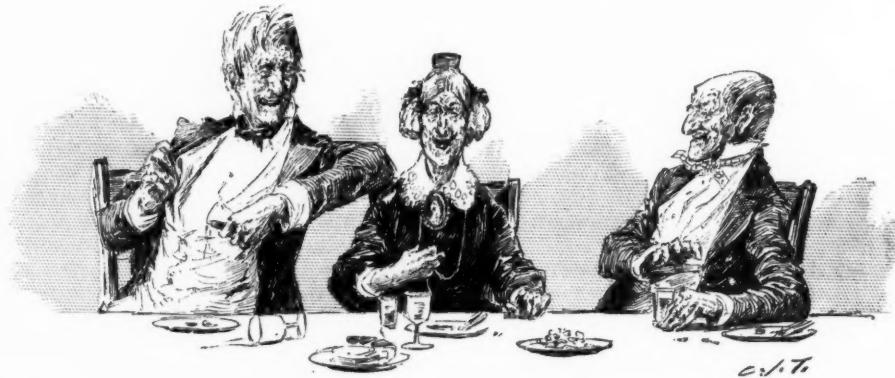
"Look here," he said to me; "there's a word about him that I want to say to you before the train starts. Come out on the platform, will you?" We walked out upon the platform, and when the train started, it started without us.

I suppose he got through all right. I found this in the papers next day:

AN EXCITING NIGHT ON A SLEEPER.

The passengers on the midnight train out of New York, on the N. Y., N. Haven & Hartford road, last night, will be likely to remember their trip—those of them who were on the car New Hampshire. An elderly man, who had been carried to the car on a stretcher, and was supposed to be an invalid in care of a nurse, woke the passengers in the night by calling for a little more Medford. His nurse was not to be found; and when the porter attempted to quiet him, he jumped from his berth in an apparently delirious state, and offered to clean out the car. He was very noisy and violent, and it was morning before the train hands could succeed in quieting him. His ticket was for North Chuggville, New Hampshire.

H. C. Bunner,
Walter Learned.



A SNAP.

HE GAZED so long and earnestly,
Such compliments he paid,
I thought he wished to flatter me --
Poor, unsuspecting maid.

He praised my raven tresses' hue,
My lips called cherries red,
And thought my eyes were heavenly blue --
At least, that's what he said.

He leaned so close, he spoke so
low,
I'm sure that no one heard;
He seemed to wish that I, you
know,
Should take him at his word.

So when he whispered, sweet as wine, --
And very near his head, --
"I wish that all these charms were mine!"
"They are all yours," I said.

W. Rev.



THE WANDERING JEW.—An absent-minded pawnbroker who forgets to collect his fees on a redeemed ticket. He has n't been heard of for several centuries.

WHETHER on land or water, a wild steer brings the danger of collisions.

THE PEOPLE of the maritime provinces evidently received their name of Blew-Nose from the frequency with which the sound of the fog-horn is heard along their coast.

TOO MUCH COMPETITION.

BIGBEE.—What's the matter, de Mahl? You seem to be out of luck.
DE MAHL.—Yep. Plumb broke.

BIGBEE.—Why, I thought you had a big thing as a soap-advertisement artist.

DE MAHL.—So I did—once; but now they've taken to copying Millais and those foreign fellows. I tell you, Bigbee, there's no show for native talent nowadays!

THE WEDDING RING.

A BACKSLIDING GROOM in Washington recently paid five hundred dollars forfeit, put up as a guarantee to cover the expense of a trousseau for the promised bride.

The idea is a good one. Enterprising newspapers will quietly add to their sporting columns one headed as above, in which items such as the following may appear:

I hereby challenge Miss Evalina Gusher, champion light flirt of Tarrytown, to meet me with white gloves and marry to a finish, Camden rules, within three weeks from date. Stakes to be four sheets, four pillow cases, half-a-dozen men's shirts, a dusting cloth, broom and potato-masher, against a stove, two chairs, coal-scuttle and boot-jack. Ten dollars forfeit and photographs to be deposited with the *Sportive Married Life*.

ALONZO SMASHEM,
Champion Masher of Hurryup.



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A Practical Joke on the Toboggan Slide.—
"Am you all ready, fren's? Den let er —



— GO!!



An Interruption of the Skating Masquerade.— "This here ice belongs to the Littlechunk Ice Company, an' if you coons don't git right off of it, I'll have you all put in the lock-up!"

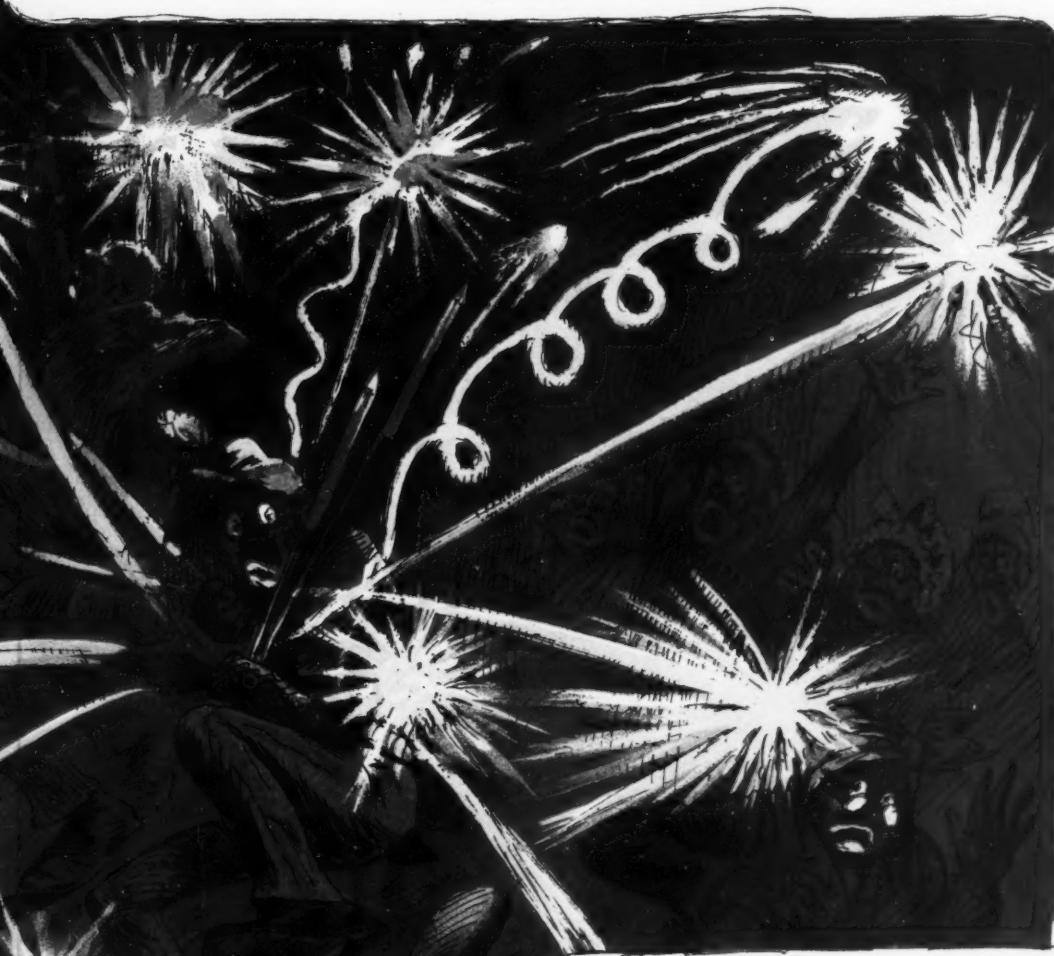


Storming of the Ice Palace by the Fire King.— The works lets them off a little too soon.

CHRISTMAS PUCC.



The Mayor and Common Council give the Invited Guests a Sleighride.



A Parade by the Snow-Shoe Club.

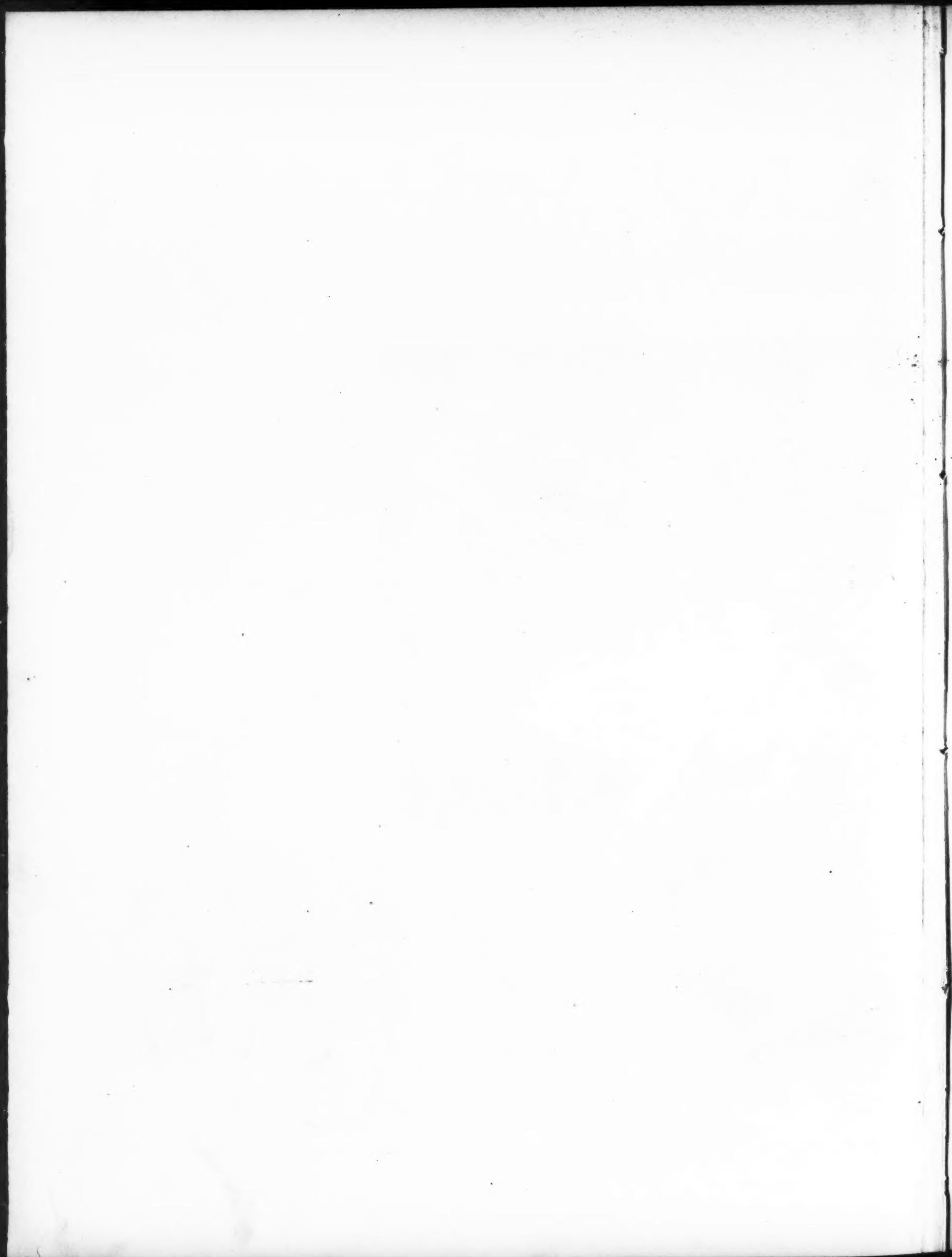


Fire King.—The Person in charge of the Fire.



Before the Departure of the Invited Guests, they are Serenaded by the Cullerville Brass Band.

CARNIVAL IN CULLERVILLE.

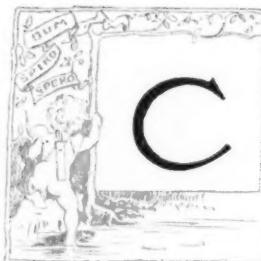




THE INTERRUPTED DUEL.

COMTE D'ERRINGER.—Un — deux — Ha! Vhy do you stoop down, M'sieu Vedderby-Toot?

WEATHERBY-TUTT.—Why, blahst it, don't you see it's beginning to wain? D' ye suppose I'm going to spoil my new twousers in an affair of this kind?



UPID'S COUPLETS.

I STRUGGLE HARD TO WOO my love
in rhyme,
But always miss it in the *second line*;
Inscribing Sophy what is dear "to
keep,"
I'm sure to sicken it with something
"sweet."

I gayly launch a bright, ambitious
"hope,"

When, presto! it goes under in a "boat;"
And when I write encomiums on "home,"
I ruin them by wailing out "alone!"

The pathetic beauties of a "single man"
Are roughly coupled with a "loving lamb;"
The weighty phrase, "My heart is not a feather,"
Must needs fly falsely into "love forever!"

When love-taught fancy plays the "lover's harp,"
The music's lost in the "divinest art;"
A master-line, extolling "beauty's sum,"
Spontaneously drivels into "one." C. D. H.

PROPER PRIDE.

FIRST SHOP-GIRL (*going home at 10 p. m.*).—Just think of Katie Workhard degrading herself so as to go out and be a housemaid, for the sake of double pay and two half-holidays a week! It's so un-American.

SECOND SHOP-GIRL.—Yes; she never showed a proper spirit of independence! By the way, I suppose we must pay something toward the forelady's Christmas present, if we want a chance to keep our places?

THE PHRASE, "French people from Cork," must have originated with somebody who was thinking of servantgallicisms.



MONOPOLY.

DOUBTFUL CUSTOMER.—Are these 'ere specs genuine crystal?

MERCHANT.—Chenoine? Of you don't mention it, I tell you someding. My bruder Isidore has bought dot Crystal Palace in England, und is cutting him up into spectacles; dot makes dem so cheap — one dollar an' a helluf a pair!

WILYUM, THE WARLIKE, and SERAFINA, THE SAD.

AN IDYL OF GOTHAM TOWN

TEXAS BILL, a ferociously attired cow-boy, defends SERAFINA, a richly clad and languid heiress, from insult offered by TOM PUNCH, B. A., M. A., (a graduate from Yalevard,) the conductor of the uptown car on which they are riding to a bal masqué. The REV. LEVITICUS PENTECOST, (a reporter in disguise,) reconciles every one, and a wedding ensues just as the car reaches the hall where the ball is in progress. Dénouement and tableau.

SCENE.—An uptown car; passengers seated; enter TOM PUNCH, collecting fares.

TOM PUNCH, sings:

ARIA.

When I stood 'mid the plaudits of thousands and spoke
The words of farewell to my Class,
Who ther would have thought in a year I'd be broke
And reduced to this pitiful pass?
Ah! little recked I, when of Charon I read
In the classical legend of yore—
How he took up his fares from the hands of the dead
As he ferried his passengers o'er
The Stygian stream—that I would take fares
From the hands of the base multitude,
And submit to the sneers and the insolent airs
Of the rich and the gibes of the rude!
Instead of a stand at the tail of a car,
My fancy previsioned my fate
As a laurel-crowned Victor, triumphant in War,
Or grasping the gavel of State.

After some cogitation, I thought I would take
The Mission to bright, sunny Spain;
But the President laughed till I feared he would break
His suspenders, or rupture a vein.
Then I thought to myself that I never was born
For Diplomacy, hollow and fair;
My genius, 't was certain, would chiefly adorn
Some grand editorial Chair.
Then I went to see Dana, and stated my case,
His journal I told him I'd run;
But the cheeky reporters guffawed in my face
And called me a son-of-a-gun!

Then I saw I had made an egregious mistake—
Hitherto I had been rather rash;
Now, the charge of some powerful Bank I would take
And financially handle its cash.
But will you believe that men could be blind
To the value of one who could speak
In Latin hexameters, easily grind
An ode into Classical Greek?
Yet, such is the world! In the Street yclept Wall
The dense-minded men that I saw
Could n't recognize Talent for Finance at all,
And bade me—go tie up my jaw!

Thus to Commerce, to Law, to Religion I gave
Each a chance of employing my brain;
But they all turned an ear to me deaf as the grave,
Or advised me to try it again.
"For Latin and Greek," quo' the impudent fools,
"While very good things in their way,
Are a drag on a man without practical rules
To teach him to make knowledge pay."
So give me your fares—(to Miss S. S.) a ten-dollar bill?
Can't change it; that racket's played out;
And you'll have to skip off—
TEXAS BILL (drawing his bowie).—Not while Texas Wil-
yum and his knife are about! (Draws pistol also.)

TOM PUNCH.—My duties are severe.

TEXAS BILL.—I do not keer a cuss.

TOM PUNCH.—I'll put her off right here.

TEXAS BILL.—If you do, there'll be a fuss.

(They grapple; SERAFINA shrieks gently; the REV. LEVITICUS interposes.)

THE REV. LEVITICUS.—Pax vobiscum! Men of blood
Lay godless wrath aside.
It is my office to do good;
To make the peace my pride.

(Separates them; they remain glaring wildly.)

TEXAS BILL.—Carambo! Lemme kill him!
Jes' lemme punch his head.
Carajo! I will fill him
Plumb to the neck with lead!

SOLO. TEXAS WILYUM.
I'm the Terror of the Town,
You kin bet;
I kin do it up in brown,
Dry or wet;
I'm a Puncher from the Plains,
I'm a Rustler with the Reins,
And when I dispense my gains,
Barkeeps sweat!

I'm a Rooster from the Roaring Rio Grande,
That's my lay;
When it comes to mashin' daisies, I'm a
dandy,
Clear the way!
I kin shoot and drink and ride,
I'm as tough as 'gator hide,
And at poker I'm no snide—
Zip! Hooray!

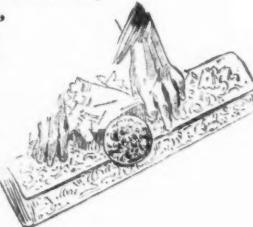
I'm a howling, yowling Horror from
the South,
Gimme room!
I'm particularly frequent with my mouth
On a boom.
By my nickel-plated triggers
You could n't tell by figgers
What Mexicans and niggers
Met their doom.

I'm a raving, staving Buzzard from the
West—
Hear me hoot!
And city marshals skip like all possessed
When I shoot.
When I leave my prairie lair,
Go to town upon a tear,
You kin bet the boldest scare
And sheriffs scoot!

Every day I eat a tenderfoot or two,
Jes' for fun;
And when I gently lisp out my bazoo.
The people run.
I'm a cyclone, I'm a blizzard,
I'm a poison-eating lizard—
May my locks otherwise be scissored—
Where's my gun?

SERAFINA (in languid ecstasy).—
It is really quite charming to one so impassive
As I am, to witness such valoresque vigor;
Such vigoresque valor is quite too beyond one
Steeped in the languid, lymphatic effulgence
Of that supreme nothingness known as Nirvana.
Permit me, Brisk Atom, sincerely
to thank you,

In the name of the lotos-fed lovers of Krishna
And gentle Bowhanie, and further to warn you
Against the corrosive mordacity vigor
And thought ever wear on the flesh's frail tissue.
Be languid and lazy—and, oh! can you give me
A scalp to embroider, a petrified finger
To wear as a charm, and to keep in remem-
brance
This blissful occasion—



THE CHRISTMAS PUCK.

TOM PUNCH (*rudely interrupting her*).—

It dulce est desipere;

But still I want your fare, Miss;
You are quite too awful slippery,
With your pseudo-blaſé air, Miss.

(**TEXAS WILYUM** levels his revolver at **TOM PUNCH**, when—)

THE REV. LEVITICUS PENTECOST arises and sings:

"THOSE JOLLY MONKS OF OLD."

I.

You may talk of the Wisdom of Bacon and Locke,
Of scientists humble or famous;
You may quote D'Alembert, you may cite Paul de Kock,
Tyndall, Darwin, John Mill or Doremus,
And to honor all these it is easy;
But the World owes a debt, which it grudges to pay,
To those jolly old Monks who have all passed away,
Who guarded the shrine of true Art in the day
Of pious St. Francis Assist.

II.

When Paynim and Christian, Crusader and Turk,
Incessant were stabbing and fighting—
On Vellum or palimpsest, calmly at work,
The Monks in their cloisters were writing;
And think to what grief 't would consign us
If Ovid and Horace were names and no more,—
Yet the loss of their works we would have to deplore
But for those jolly Friars whose morals we score
In the days of St. Thomas Aquinas.

III.

When Letters and Art stumbled groping for light,
And the Sword was the symbol of Glory,—
Who saved us the legend of Hector's great fight
And the Mantuan's wonderful story
From the wrath of the rude and unlearned?
The wisdom of Sparta, the valor of Rome,
The gods who looked down from Olympian dome,
And the Great Book itself with the Monks found a home
In the days of the worthy St. Bernard.

IV.

The love of old Egypt, the art life of Greece,
The wisdom that Plato and Socrates taught;
The legends of War, the ballads of Peace,
What Scipio did and what Cicero thought
We owe to those rollicking Friars.
What matters it, then, when their labor was done,
If they stole from their cells for a bit of sly fun,
Since Letters and Science from ruin were won
By the work of those same jolly Friars.

SERAFINA.—

Ah! Reverend Father, if one may applaud
A sentiment so mediævally chaste,
Permit me to embrace you. Alas! how prosaic,
How ineffably crass, and how poignantly practical
This world hath become!

'T would almost induce one
To forswear cenobitical life; it is sheerly
Impatible; oft in psychomachic frenzy
I long for the somnolent bliss of Nirvana.
Imagine one steeped in an inchoate vision,
A vision soul-heavy with bliss soporific,
Rudely shocked into sense by a liveried menial
Demanding one's fare! But for this gallant stranger,
Who, fresh from the haunts of the querulous bison,
Fresh from the airs of the West uncontaminant,
Guiltless of social restraint and hypocrisy,
Stalwart and lush in his picturesquely vigor—
But for him I would now be compelled to abandon
My seat, and betake me to action pedestrian.

THE REV. LEVITICUS.—

Then why not, fair daughter, for good and for ill,
Accept this young man as a partner for life?
He's willing; and now, for that ten-dollar bill,
Right here I will make him and you man and wife.

Chorus of PASSENGERS.—

Hooray! Hooray! For the Cow-boy's Bride,
A wedding is just the thing!
We'll see them tied as we take our ride,
And the car-bells merrily ring, ring, ring!
We'll kiss the bride as we take our ride,
And the car-bells merrily ring.



(**TEXAS BILL** and **SERAFINA** stand up, and are united as the
PASSENGERS sing.)

SONG AND CHORUS.

"CUPID; THE LOVER'S TRUE FRIEND."
(*By ENTIRE COMPANY.*)

I.

Jupiter, Lord of Olympus,
Father of Heaven, and King,
One day found the labor of ruling—
A weary and burdensome thing.
Then he selected lieutenants,
Assigned to each god a domain,
And over the fortunes of mortals
He bade them with wisdom to reign.

Chorus.—Now, let us sing pæans to Cupid,
To Cupid, the Ruler of Hearts;
Let us welcome the whiz of the arrows,
And stand in the way of his darts.

II.

To Mercury, nimble and cunning,
He entrusted musicians and knaves;
To Mars he gave War and its horrors;
Silenus made drunkards his slaves;
Lame Vulcan taught men at his smithy;
While over the wicked in Hades
Ruled Pluto; and modest Minerva
Taught proper deportment to ladies.

Chorus.—Now, let us sing pæans to Cupid,
To Cupid, the Ruler of Hearts;
Let us welcome the whiz of the arrows,
And stand in the way of his darts.

III.

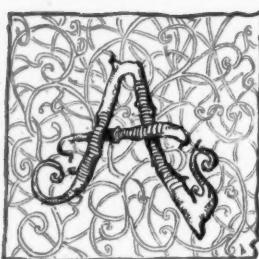
Apollo took charge of the weather;
Fair Diana the chase gayly led;
To Neptune was given the ocean,
To Venus the soft nuptial bed.
Each deity thus had an altar
Where mortals petitioned their aid;
But at Cupid's the prayers were the longest,
And to him the best offerings were made.

Chorus.—Now, let us sing pæans to Cupid,
To Cupid, the Ruler of Hearts;
Let us welcome the whiz of the arrows,
And stand in the way of his darts.

(**CURTAIN.**)



THE CHRISTMAS PUCK.



TALE OF LOVE UNLEASHED.

A SEQUEL TO THE QUICK, OR THE GONE-BEFORE;
By 'Mélie Rives.'

PROLOGUE.

THERE WAS no moon that night. There ought to have been, according to the almanac; but Chaste Diana, when she saw what rakish things were aswep in Lalage Bly's garden, hastily tied a nubia about her head, and forbore to shine.

CHAPTER I.

He rushed from the front door of Liberté, took the steps at a bound, and sped like an ostrich up and down the long avenue which led to the road.

It was bitter cold, but he felt it not; although in the agony of his parting he had forgotten both hat and Inverness cape. The frozen ground crunched and creaked beneath his tread; sudden hail rattled around. Hearing nothing, he went his way, hungering after the past.

He recalled their meeting after she had sent him the waggish telegram: "This time it's for keeps;" how, listening to the storm, they had sat together in the dark at the top of the grand staircase — she with her plush-like arms yoked about his neck. He remembered her unique words:

"Listen, Duck, how the willows wig-wam! Hear the wind coughing down the avenue! Hear the torrent as it gurgles down the gorge! I'm frightened, Duck! Kiss me, Duck!"

The memory of the kisses well nigh strangled him. Unrequited love was doing its work — so was anger — so was jealousy. Romeo was a snow-ball — Othello, in the climax of his fury, an icicle, compared with Duck Ever-hot that night.

He touched a grove of sycamores — the grove went off like a lucifer match. All Virginia saw the flame and understood. Well they knew that no woman save Lalage Bly could implant such fire in breast of man.

CHAPTER II.

The earth all around and about Duck soon became hotter than summer; orchids bloomed! Two twelve-thread plume-birds came up direct from the equator, and began nesting in a paw-paw tree!

He telephoned for his tennis suit, and began marking off a court.

"Any thing for distraction!" cried Duck.

CHAPTER III.

And Lalage — what of her?

She slept in the spare-room; but, tiring of that, took her bedding, at 11:30, into the billiard-room, and passed the rest of the night on the pool-table.

"Like a sport in crowded summer hotel," murmured Lalage, as she crept beneath the blankets.

CHAPTER IV.

At sunrise the forcing-house exploded, and strawberries, which, from the fury of the forcing were as large as cannon-balls and much hotter than lava, thundered to the heavens and whirred northward.

**
"What's awhisk?" exclaimed a polar bear, teetering on an iceberg in the Arctic Ocean, as one of the blistering berries singed his fur on its way to the sea.

"Love's awhisk!" answered another berry, as it drilled a tunnel into the very core of the ice.

"Love's a torrid thing!" growled the polar bear, quitting the now perforated berg.

John Worthum Wood.

SENTIMENT VERSUS BUSINESS.

YOUNG BORROWE (who has been accommodated with a small loan — gushingly). — Oh, my friend, words can not express the extent of my obligation to you for this kindly action!

OLD VAN LOAN. — Eh? Yes they can. Just sit down here and make a little thirty-day note.

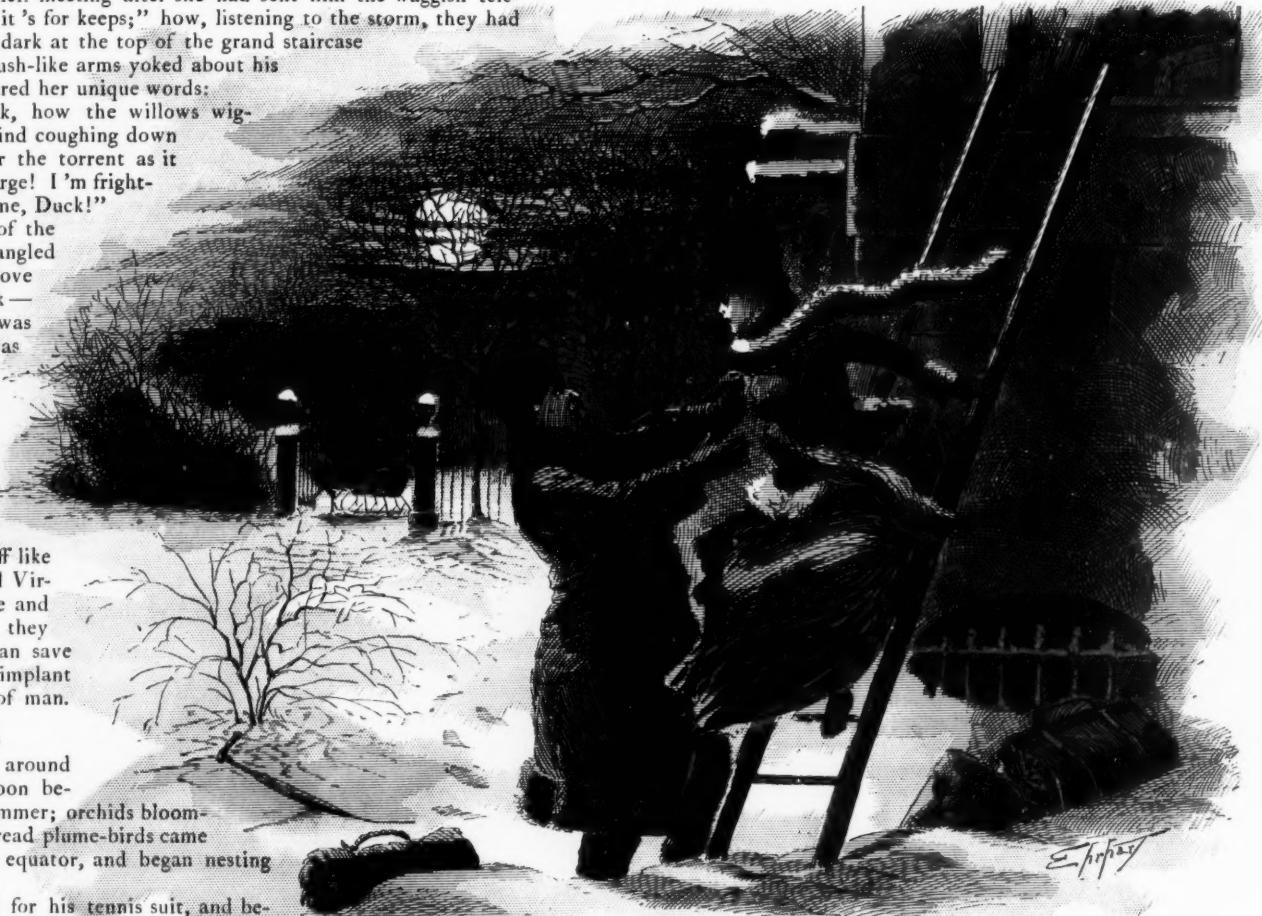
"THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT is an all-pervading one," remarked a father as he bought his little boy a fifteen-cent tin horse; "but it costs money."

KING CHARLES evidently was making a Knight of it when he dubbed that famous piece of beef Sir Loin.

THE POINTER is the dog the Wall Street shepherd uses in driving lambs to market.

WE SUPPOSE THAT the only real pleasure that can be felt by the collector of antique furniture is to realize how uncomfortably somebody else used to live.

WHEN A MAN steals a silver dollar from you, there is n't one bit of consolation in recalling the fact that it is really worth only about eighty cents.



A DISASTROUS OMISSION.

MISS MARIE GOLD (who has rashly consented). — Why, this will never do, Upson. Have n't you forgotten something?

UPSON DOWNES (who thought he had fixed it this time, sure). —

Nothing, dearest, nothing. Hurry, please — there is no time to be lost.

MISS MARIE GOLD. — Oh, Upson, I can't go this way! You have n't even brought an expressman to take away my trunk!

DOUBLE DEALING.

She has two eyes that twinkle so,
One never can resist them;
Two cheeks, both red and white, you know,
Two lips, and I have kissed them!
Two tiny feet, surpassing art,
Two white hands, soft and supple;
And yesterday she stole my heart —
To make another couple.



C. D. H.

Blue · Eyes · and · Brown



I.
BLUE EYES! A mountain stream
Is not more blue;
She trifles with her cream
As women do—
While I—I smoke and dream,
Contented too.

II.
She wears my wedding ring;
She is my own;
Yet swift, on sudden wing,
My thought has flown
Back, where wild roses cling
And hay is mown.

After-thought.
But if—suppose it true—
These eyes, so near,
Were brown, instead of blue,
Warm, more than clear,
Perhaps—who knows?—my sighs
Might still float down
The Past, in search of eyes
That were *not* brown!

Madeline S. Bridges.



III.
The slowly brightening moon
(How beats my heart!)
Rises too fair, too soon—
They have no art
To lengthen Time's scant boon
Who kiss and part.

IV.
I kissed her mouth and hair,
Her lids that fell—
Drowned in quick tears that bear
The heart's farewell.
Of Love's last sweet despair
What tongue can tell?

V.
Blue eyes! Alas, alas,
For dear brown eyes,
For roses in the grass,
And moonlit skies,
For time beloved that was,
And sad good-byes!

VI.
Alas! while through the haze
Of my cigar
Blue eyes send tranquil rays,
My heart afar
Wanders, a wild-rose maze,
Where brown eyes are.



HOLLOW-BERRIES

CUTTING A DASH IN SOCIETY—D—ing the Waiters.

THE LOW CORSAGE gives rise to a great deal of back talk.

MANY A SOCIETY GIRL plays a one week's marital engagement.

IT IS SAID that the girl with the rose-bud mouth has a jacque-mi-nose.

BIGBEE SAYS that the most expensive music he has heard lately is the laughter of a sleigh-belle.

THEY TELL of a Chicago man whose parents were so very rich that he was born with a silver knife in his mouth.

YOU CAN'T turn a butterfly into a caterpillar; yet some men are disappointed because the angel of courtship does n't turn out to be the patient drudge of marriage.

L. Q. ASKS: "How do you preserve autumn leaves?" Ans.—We do not know; we never tried it; we do not think they would make good preserves. It might do to coat them with molasses, and then dry them.

"THE BOOK OF SNOBS"—The New York Social Register.

A PLUM-PUDDING on the table is worth two in the stomach.

PERHAPS IF the potato did n't have any eyes, it would not be so often mashed.

MOST BABIES are given to chewing gum; but chewing-gum is rarely given to babies.

MOST OF the lords and dukes who marry American girls wed for a title—but it is title to real estate they are after.

WHEN THE small boy stands in front of a store, meditatively gazing on a sign which reads, "Slippers Cheap," his puerile mind instinctively grasps the scope and purport of a boycott.

IT IS AN ancient and pleasing sign of devotion for the lover to kiss his lady's eyes. This custom, it is perhaps needless to say, did not originate in Boston; for who can imagine Hiram saying to Priscilla: "My love, will you kindly remove your spectacles?"

SOME CHRISTMAS ENTERPRISES.

Collected by J. K. Bangs.



PERSONS WHO contemplate sending presents to friends, in the expectation of reciprocity, should now **GO TO GRADSTREET** and learn their financial standing.

MADAME STROZZI,
(*Late of Paris,*)

Begs to inform her patrons that she has on hand a Choice Supply of Christmas Hosiery of DOUBLE CAPACITY.
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Our system is unique.

Subscribers to our Association may send in the names of persons to whom they wish to give presents, with the amount they may be willing to pay them, free. These amounts will be credited on our books to the beneficiaries named, who may in turn become subscribers to the Company, whereupon a balance will be struck, and all persons to whose credit a balance may stand will receive a gift equal in value to that balance, minus our commission, which is twenty-five per cent.

Such subscribers as may fail to be accredited with a balance in actual cash or gifts will at least be spared the annoyance of having to select gifts for their friends, than which nothing in the social world is more distasteful to the average donor; the wiles of swindlers leaving packages of tissue paper at your home, and requesting payment of express charges, are eluded; while the necessity of writing letters of thanks by the beneficiary is obviated, a simple receipt for the goods received being the sole acknowledgment required by the Company; and, greatest of all, the wearisome dangers of Christmas

shopping are obviated by our system, which is so regulated as to bring to its patrons a maximum of profit at a minimum of expense.

By Our System You Avoid:

Christmas Trees at Home,

Danger of Fires from Lighted Candles,

The Expense of Tree Decoration;

as everything pertaining to the season is managed at the Company's offices with neatness and despatch.

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THE CHRISTMAS GIFT ASSOCIATION, [*Limited*],

CHARLES SNIDER,

President.

10673 Bowery Place.

I am a small boy with parsimonious parents, and would like the means to buy myself a pair of skates, five pounds of French candies, a box of tools, a magic lantern, a bicycle, a pair of goats, two wagons and harness, for a Christmas present. Please send me ten cents in postage stamps, and make two copies of this request, putting at the top of each the next consecutive number (the same on both copies), giving one to each of two friends, asking them to do the same. Do not destroy this request, but hand it to a friend if you are unwilling to subscribe to this worthy cause. A single break in the chain may deprive me of one of the goats or the skates.

Christmas comes but once a year.

Ten cents in stamps is not very much to you.

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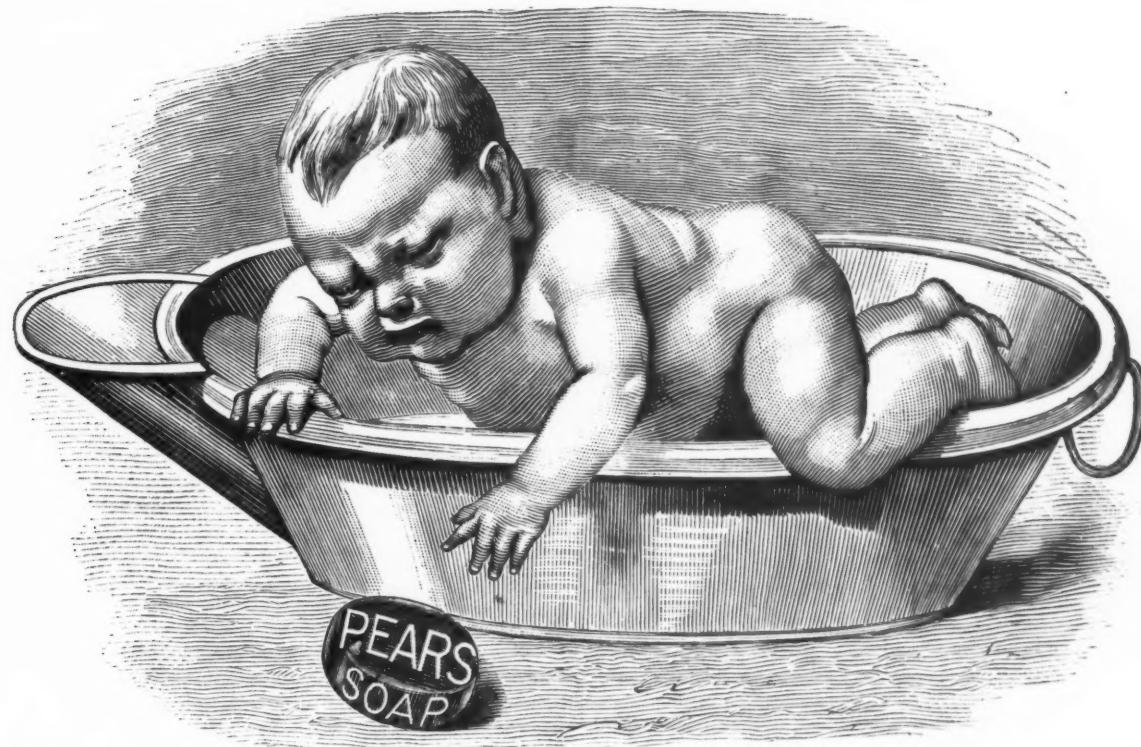


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SISTER BESSIE.—Pretty well done; but when I was at Vassar — er — h'm — ahem — but run out, now; that's a good boy. I want to read!

"THE UNHAPPY BOY" AND "THE HAPPY BOY."



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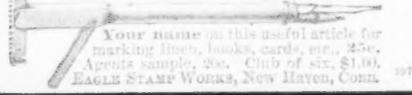
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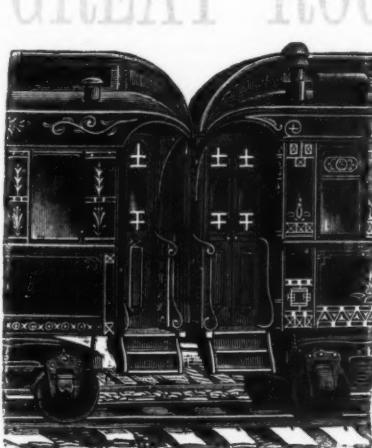
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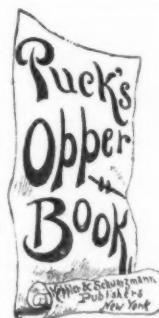
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And lo! the course is sped,
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America has won the prize
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